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The Week

APPARENTLY the British and American governments which differed sharply and unfortunately over the proposal for a preparatory conference, antecedent to the main assembly in Washington, are again coming together. The decision of Lloyd George to accept the invitation to Washington is one sign of a better understanding. The more hospitable attitude of the State Department to the suggestion of the consideration of European economic distress is another. But most important of all is the still uncontradicted report of the concentration of a large part of the British battle fleet in the Pacific. The more closely this announcement is studied the more important it becomes and the more favorable to an Anglo-American cooperation. It would mean, for one thing, that the British Admiralty does not consider the Atlantic fleet of the United States a danger to the British Empire and that it is ready to reduce its own effective Atlantic fleet to comparatively small proportions without insisting on any similar action by the United States. A British naval concentration in the Pacific would, it must be remembered, leave the British islands partly unprotected, whereas an American naval concentration in the Pacific would not leave the Atlantic coast unprotected. With the Panama Canal open the American Pacific fleet would form a more effective potential force for operations in the Atlantic than would a British Pacific fleet.

ACCORDING to the latest reports from Washington the administration is coming around to the British view in respect to one important aspect of the Conference. It is prepared to concede at least in part the British request for a discussion in Washington of the serious economic predicament of Europe. This is a wise concession to make. It would be sheer pedantry for any international conference at the present time to ignore the prevailing economic distress. Yet there was also something to be said on behalf of the original scruple of the administration against complicating and overloading the agenda with too many perplexing and controversial subjects. If the present Conference makes explicit the conditions under which Europe can limit its expenditure on armies, and if it can secure an agreement to limit the expenditure on navies based upon an understanding about the future of China, it will have accomplished as much as can reasonably be expected. What the American government could do, however, would be to assign a definite amount of time to the consideration of the economic distress. It could then employ the allotment of time to pressing upon its associates the plan of holding at an early date a special international economic congress and to arranging its program, its organization and its scope.

SOONER or later, it was fated that ex-Emperor Karl should make another attempt to regain the throne of Hungary. If he had succeeded in the attempt, the next object of Hapsburg intrigue would have been the reconstitution, in part at

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least, of the old polyglot Danubian Monarchy. Now that the attempt has failed it is easy to dismiss it as a romantic dream. For the strongest reason in the world the Little Entente was bound to insist on the expulsion of Karl, and the Great Entente could not possibly have countenanced his return to the Hungarian throne, much less his more ambitious projects. That should have been sufficient to keep Karl at his ease in his Swiss retreat. But the Great Entente had shown, in the case of Constantine, that its irrevocable decisions could be revoked. And the Little Entente is not yet so stable an association that it might not have been seriously embarrassed in an attempt to determine the political arrangements of so warlike a state as Hungary. Karl had numerous and intelligent supporters in Hungary, with more sympathizers than will ever be counted not only in the lands of the former Dual Monarchy, but in Germany, Italy and even in France.

EVEN to those who have followed closely the course of events in Central Europe it appears almost incredible that the Hapsburgs should so soon have become a serious problem. In the light of their historical record, their dislodgment should have meant their extinction. That this did not prove true is chiefly due to the fact that the condition of Central Europe is at present so unhappy as to give a roseate hue to the memories of the old regime. In Hungary itself the only practical alternative to Karl since the Entente destroyed Bela Kun has been Regent Horthy. Instead of monarchy resting on traditional forces, Hungary has had to endure monarchy resting upon brutal might and terrorism. In most of the lands transferred to Rumania and Jugoslavia a very large section of the population feels aggrieved with the new regime, and Czecho-Slovakia is not yet a wholly harmonious and contented nation. As for Austria, its political rôle must necessarily be passive, since nothing can happen to it that would make its situation worse. If the destroyers of the Dual Monarchy had wished their work to be permanent they should have made provision by which the intermixed populations of Central Europe could at least have lived. It is to be hoped that they will take warning from the crisis that has passed. There are more Hapsburgs at large.

NOTHING could have been more polite and gracious than the telegrams between the Vatican and King George on the subject of "the troubles in Ireland," but the rude and tactless Irish President seized on the occasion to remind the Pope that "the troubles between Ireland and Britain have their sources in the fact that the rulers of Britain have sought to impose their will upon Ireland." So little Papist an organ as the London Times assures us that this message must "fill his Holiness with dismay and certainly arouse the indignation of the people of this country and the dominions." As for his Holiness, the London Times seems to speak authoritatively, but why should Britain and the Dominions be indignant? The whole world knows that the rulers of Britain did seek to impose their will upon Ireland and only the resistance and belligerence of Ireland brought about the present negotiations. These negotiations are not an act of favor, unless one assumes that force is the ultimate reality in the world. They are Britain's rational attempt to settle by consent a problem created by her previous aggression. It may not be polite to say so in the moment of negotiation, but it was presumptuous on the part of the English spokesman, King George, to refer to the Irish as "my people" at this moment. If the Irish people were "my people" there would be no need for these peace negotiations. They cannot be broken off because de Valera has annoyingly told the truth to a potentate of whom Irishmen are supposed to stand in superstitious awe.

THE proposed railroad strike has revealed once again the fundamental want of unity in the American organized labor movement. This discord betrayed itself in the steel strike, which did not receive loyal support from the A. F. of L., in the recent convention of the Miners Union, which was distracted by factional fights, in the Amalgamated lock-out of last year, during which the union received lukewarm assistance from the other unions in the needle trades, and finally in the outlaw strike of the railroad trainmen in 1920. There is every indication that the Brotherhood chiefs acted under compulsion when they ordered a strike. They realized the difficulty of putting up a good case with the public or of winning a victory, but they knew that, considering the exasperated state of mind of their followers, the penalty for refusing to call an official strike would be another outlaw walk-out which might disrupt their unions. Yet when they are forced to order the men out, they meet with a refusal of sympathy from Mr. Gompers and they are deserted by the railroad unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. The different factions in organized American labor are more divided one from another than they are from their hostile employers. Its leaders are for the most part more interested in maintain-

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ing their own power than they are in promoting the interests of the rank and file. It is no wonder that American unionism is ineffective.

THE demonstrations in behalf of Sacco and Vanzetti in Paris and Rome are greatly to be regretted. They serve to shift the case in public opinion from private to social crime. Sacco and Vanzetti were charged with murder with robbery as a motive. The defence sought to explain the suspicious actions and contradictory statements of the accused by their connection with radical activities in this country. The judge referred to these explanations in a charge to the jury which certainly contained an appeal to social and patriotic prejudice. The fact remains, however, that the men were convicted of a private crime on what seems to have been insufficient evidence. The chance of saving them from execution depends largely on arousing public opinion in their behalf. The American public is jealous of foreign interference and sensitive on the subject of social crime. Once convinced that these men are dangerous to society, and that they are for that reason the object of intervention by foreign radical forces, public opinion is too likely to react strongly against them, to hold that whether guilty or not they should be handled as enemies of the social order and that it is a matter of national prestige to hang them. The lesson of the Chicago anarchists' case is obvious.

ACCORDING to Colonel Arthur Woods, a large number of municipalities in all parts of the country are preparing to combat unemployment by the inauguration of public works. The figures given by Colonel Woods are impressive in themselves; unfortunately, when viewed in their relation to the extent of unemployment, they look like a drop in a bucket. But they involve a principle for which we ought to be grateful. That principle is that employment can not be left to take care of itself, with alternations of feast and famine, but should be distributed with a fair uniformity, so far as that is possible. There is never any time when there is not a vast deal of work that needs to be done. Every city in America needs more streets graded and paved, more bridges, viaducts, etc. In the country as a whole we are only beginning to provide ourselves with highways suitable to the needs of a highly civilized state. We need tens of thousands of miles of improved roads. In these public needs we could have at least a partial regulator of the volume of employment. Go slow with public improvements in good times and press them forward with vigor in bad times. That is the reverse of our traditional practice.

THE arrest of some fifty men in New York for the crime of having no place to sleep except the public parks shows a reversion on the part of the municipal authorities to the attitude out of which they were shocked into decency by Mr. Ledoux's visit. There is a natural tendency on the part of the public to release itself from responsibility by attributing the cause of unemployment to the perversity of the unemployed. The Times and the Tribune continue to lay to the soul of society the flattering unction that men who are out of work will not accept jobs at a living wage, and that the organization of charity in New York is so perfect that any one who sleeps out of doors does so from choice. Not only are the unemployed held economically responsible for their condition, but they are represented as a menace of violence. The reason is seriously given for not opening the armories as dormitories that society cannot afford to put its strong places in the hand of the enemy. Naturally the next step is to take unemployment as evidence of criminal intent, and to resort to our admirable criminal law for remedy.

IT is true that many men out of work will not take common jobs at less than a living wage. They are skilled mechanics who think, rightly or wrongly, that they have been locked out as the result of a conspiracy on the part of employers to force all wages down. They consider that they are doing greater harm by consenting to a lowering of recognized standards of living than by begging. It is true that the methods of relief which can be devised at the moment, for providing food and sleeping places, are unscientific makeshifts. The people who are so zealous for the scientific administration of charity should have begun earlier to think of a scientific administration of industry which would have made unnecessary the resort to charity. Moreover, it is open to them and is their duty to see exactly how their organized charity is comporting itself in this crisis—the Municipal Lodging House, the Municipal Employment Bureau, the United Charities, the Salvation Army. It is true the unemployed are a menace to society. They will not resort generally to violence even under the provocation of Mayor Hylan's proclamation and the batons of his police; but repudiated by the public, treated as economic perverts, beaten up by the police, jailed as criminals, they will necessarily become unsocialized outcasts. Then society will find warrant for dealing with them in the spirit admirably expressed by an official of the municipal lodging house. "They should be shot at sunrise."

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A FEW weeks ago The New Republic estimated the policy of the Soviet government in requisitioning food from the peasants as a cause of the famine, second in importance to the drouth. In view of the statements of Colonel Haskell and Mr. Paxton Hibben we are obliged to revise that estimate, and admit that the second potent cause of the Russian disaster was invasion, revolt and blockade, for which the United States shares direct responsibility with the Allies. If anything can stir the conscience of the American people it should be the recollection that their own government actively promoted the conditions from which Russia is suffering today, and their own Red Cross used its funds to contribute to her destruction. In the early days of the revolution the American Red Cross under Robins, Thatcher and Wardwell achieved high distinction and rendered brilliant service in the cause of humanity, the only cause which it should represent. Later its director Livingston Farrand and his subordinates were decorated by General Wrangel for conspicuous services, and one of the prisoners about whom the American government was so solicitous was a Red Cross captain captured as a combatant in Wrangel's army. If the American people want to know explicitly why they should help Russia today they can find the reason in that part of the history of American-Russian relations written in the last two years by the Red Cross.

"PASTORS condemn coming rail strike." That is a Times headline, rather more unequivocal than the text which follows, but that is not the point. The point is that the pastors in question are doing exactly what the committee of the Interchurch World Movement on the steel strike were criticized so furiously for doing. They have come down out of the theological upper air into the dusty arena of the industrial conflict. And to judge from the Times quotations, they have got some of the dust in their eyes. Dr. Hartsock, for example, grieves because "we have evaded issues and avoided conflicts; we have compromised situations with the result that every once in a while we are brought into situations like that which confronts us today." Has Dr. Hartsock never discovered that economic life is now and has always been a field of compromise and adjustment? Dr. Young declares that "more and more the public conscience is against strikes. Whatever help they have given the workingman in other days, their principle is increasingly felt to be unworthy of our best ideals." According to our view, if this is the kind of light a pastor has in him, nevertheless let it shine. But we wonder what the authoritative bodies for the suppression of free opinion in the pulpit will do about it.

TO those who were young and hopeful sixteen years ago, the entrance of Mr. William Travers Jerome into the present New York mayoralty campaign, recalls a great spiritual tragedy. When Mr. Jerome entered the political arena twenty years ago as the reform candidate for district attorney, he aroused unprecedented moral enthusiasm, especially among the younger voters. This enthusiasm galvanized into active political life the hitherto apathetic East Side of New York, and swept into office the first reform mayor of Greater New York, Seth Low. During the first term of his office Mr. Jerome continued to show an independence which held the esteem of his numerous followers and caused him to be re-elected despite the great Hearst wave of 1905. It was after this election that Mr. Jerome began to disappoint his progressive admirers most bitterly by showing himself cynically obtuse to the widespread demand that justice be meted out to powerful offenders as well as to pickpockets and petty grafters. The great insurance investigation of 1905 which showed how free and easy powerful bankers were with other people's money, the revelation of the widespread illegal practice of rebating by railroads, and similar events, aroused the moral conscience of the American people. Mr. Roosevelt rose to the height of his popularity by giving official expression to this moral indignation. Under him conservative federal attorneys like Henry L. Stimson had powerful railroads like the New York Central fined for rebating and officers of the Sugar Trust fined and sent to prison for other frauds.

BUT Mr. Jerome, who had shown himself a savage persecutor of Sam Parks, a corrupt but dying labor leader, would not lift a finger against powerful interests that had stolen millions and had systematically corrupted the administration of justice in New York City. When the people of New York City, resenting Mr. Jerome's familiarity with the Ryan boys at a time when Mr. Ryan's acts were under strong suspicion, refused to reelect Mr. Jerome, the latter began to show an amazing pettiness and moral callousness, most disheartening to those who had put their faith in him as an honest man in politics. On his return to the private practice of the law he at once became a defender of such public offenders as the Poultry Trust. Finally Mr. Jerome lost all semblance of moral prestige by defending the notorious Robin, the bank wrecker. After Mr. Jerome insisted that his client was insane, Robin confessed that the whole thing was shammed. Mr. Jerome then dropped out of public notice; but the deep disappointment of his many enthusiastic supporters in the campaign of 1901 was a profound tragedy.

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What is Coming in Germany?

THE fall of the Wirth ministry came as a surprise to no one. That it was to be a short lived government was evident from the beginning. For its essential function was to be the accepting in form of agreements dictated by the conquerors, agreements which no government, even with the best of will, could execute. Whatever may be the case at some future time, when world trade shall have resumed its old activity, there is not at present a possibility of Germany's finding in any legitimate way the amount of exchange needed to pay the recurring instalmants on the indemnity. There was open to the government only an illegitimate way, that of selling marks abroad for what they would fetch, an operation that can not often be repeated, since the effect of employing it even once was to cut the mark in two. But the alternative to so disastrous a financial policy was an extension of the French occupation, and possibly the loss of the whole of Upper Silesia. Dr. Wirth had no predilections for a policy of wild cat finance, but it seemed to him a lesser evil than the other. Besides, there seemed a remote chance that the Allies, after a demonstration of Germany's inability to meet the indemnity terms, as they stood, would relax them, in order to permit the survival of a government which represented the most democratic and pacific elements in German life.

This chance has not materialized. Briand still talks eloquently of Germany's duty of living up to the engagements to which she subscribed under duress, with both sides fully aware of their impracticability. The decision on Silesia has been reached, and is regarded by Germany not as a compromise actuated by a sense of international justice, but as a further step in the dismemberment of Germany. How far this attitude is justified we need not here undertake to say. We are considering the position of the German government, and that depends not on the abstract justice of the decision but upon the popular feeling towards it.

And whether the decision is justified on international grounds or not, there can be no question that it acts to curtail Germany's ultimate capacity to pay the indemnity. Silesian coal was a resource upon which Germany could count to produce a supply of foreign exchange. Though the unsettled character of the central European markets would have precluded any very great development of coal export in the near future, such a development was bound to come sooner or later. By the terms of the decision Poland, not Germany, is to profit by that development. It is therefore not unnatural that the Germans should feel that they have been unfairly treated. In the German view, if the Allies meant to cut down Germany's assets, they should have cut down her liabilities also. And the government which accepted the figure of liabilities was felt to be convicted of diplomatic unfitness since it held no such readjustment in reserve. It is true that no other government could have won any better terms from the Allies, and a less democratic government might easily have brought down worse disasters upon Germany. But that is a kind of consideration upon which the average citizen never lays great weight. Failure is no less failure because it is inevitable.

What is coming next? Any party or group of parties that undertakes to govern Germany will have to do so under conditions as unfavorable as those that confronted Dr. Wirth. Fulfillment of the indemnity agreement remains the chief problem of the German government. The German central government was and remains in fact little more than an agency for the collection of Allied claims, and since those claims exceed any possibility of collection, the German government is in the position of continually attempting to exact from an unwilling public all that the traffic will bear. Any drastic taxation program, any attempt to administer vigorously the existing laws, must encounter the fierce opposition of men who feel that they are being taxed for alien benefit. But any weakness in levying and enforcing taxes will entail the danger of drawing the French troops farther into Germany. In the circumstances it is impossible that any government should long retain its credit with the people. No matter what the strength of the personnel of the government, the odds are tremendously against its long continuance in office.

What Germany is being subjected to is a progressive weaning from any confidence in central government. One body of men after another undertakes to guide the fortunes of the state, only to retire with a confession of failure. Particularist tendencies on the part of the several states become more and more active. The great industrial organizations manifest more and more a disposition to find laws for themselves. While the unhappy central government wastes itself in futile negotiations with the Allies the great industrial corporations consolidate their hold on the resources of the country, establish for themselves an international position and make their preparations for the future.

And the future which they envisage is not one of a regenerate Germany living meagrely and working industriously through a generation to pay

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off the indemnity. The industrial magnates of Germany do not foresee that any considerable part of the indemnity will be paid. They foresee a condition in which a central government, visibly supported by foreign arms, will divert to foreign account such sums as would otherwise go to civil administration and social welfare, but incompetent to cut deeply into the stream of profits. They foresee the reduction of the German working population to a docile body of serfs, rigidly controlled by foreign bayonets, and more potently by the power of capital over the food supply. With such an instrument of production in their possession, the German industrial magnates look forward to a brilliant prospect for themselves in the international markets.

Allied policy seems bent on giving to Germany that best of governments, from a capitalistic point of view, which governs least, or practically not at all. It might be a sane policy if the Allied countries were quite independent of the international market, or were themselves resolved to scrap their political institutions and leave the direction of all vital affairs to massed capital. On the same hypothesis it would be a matter of indifference to America whether Germany is to be transformed into the true type of capitalistic feudalism. But if we still wish to engage in international trade we shall find the trend of events in Germany worth our reflection.

A Lasting Railroad Settlement

SOME slight possibility of averting the railroad strike still exists. While the failure of the conference during the past week between the leaders of the unions and the Railroad Labor Board is not encouraging, the order just issued by the Board calling a further conference to include the railroad executives as well, may conceivably lead to a settlement. Nothing has, of course, been said concerning the basis of further negotiation. But it is not unlikely that the proposals made in Washington by the public members of the Board still represent the only terms on which even conversations between the unions and the executives can be held. As they were reported in the newspapers, these proposals amounted to a request to the union that it withdraw the strike order provided that the railroads agree to reduce railroad rates immediately and to withdraw, for the present at least, their demand for a further cut in wages of ten per cent.

Aside from the issues in the present controversy and the necessity of upholding the authority of the Labor Board, the proposals of the Board have much to recommend them. In the whole discussion of the desirability of immediate rate reductions, it has been generally assumed that the railroad executives were right in insisting that the reduction come from a second cut in wages and not from the one made in July of this year. This assumption disregards, however, the arguments used by the Interstate Commerce Commission when it authorized the rate increases of the summer of 1920. "The proposals of the carriers as originally presented and as considered throughout the hearings," the Commission stated in its decision of July 29, 1920, "made no allowance for increased wages of railway employees not then effective. In the course of the hearings it was stated that a decision of the United States Railroad Labor Board would soon be forthcoming granting certain increases in the wages of railway employees, and it was generally agreed that we should give due consideration to the award of that Board when made. . . . In discussing the results of operation in each group we shall . . . refer to the wage award and to its effects upon the operating expenses of the carriers in the several groups." The Commission in its decision then proceeded to analyze the effects on the operating expenses of the railroads of the wage award just made by the Labor Board. The decision of the Commission goes on to say that "in the original application, the carriers proposed to obtain the desired additional revenue by general percentage increases in the respective groups, applicable to freight traffic alone. No increases were suggested upon passenger, express or mail traffic. In their amended proposals, following the award of the Labor Board, they propose to make increases upon all classes of traffic." When, accordingly, the final rate adjustments were made, the Commission granted the carriers general percentage increases not only on freight traffic but also on passenger and other traffic; and the increases which it granted on freight rates were in excess of those originally proposed by the carriers. A part of the rate increase of 1920, therefore, was clearly designed to cover the wage increase of that year. The cut in wages of July, 1921, on the other hand, which itself was meant to take from the workers a part of the increase they got in 1920, was not similarly followed by a reduction in rates. The proposal on this matter now made by the Labor Board would seem to carry forward, therefore, into 1921 the theory of the 1920 rate decisions of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

A settlement on these or other terms, however, would at the present time derive its greatest significance from the added prestige which it would undoubtedly lend to future decisions of the Railroad

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Labor Board. It was pointed out in these columns several months ago that in all of its decisions up to that time the Board had given evidence of the capacity and the desire to exercise its functions in the fairest and most effective manner possible. Unfortunately the railroad executives by their acts and many of the leading newspapers of the country by their statements lost few opportunities to help undermine what authority the Board derived from the Transportation act. In their failure to comply directly and indirectly with the ruling of the Board, the Atlanta, Erie, Pennsylvania Railroads and others, received prompt and vigorous support from a large section of the press. Even at the present time, with a gigantic strike impending and with the consequent need of impressing upon everyone concerned the authority of the Board, some of our leading newspapers carry side by side with their attacks on the patriotism of the Railway Brotherhoods, accounts of the flagrant violations of the decisions of the Board by the Pennsylvania Railroad, with no comment either by way of advice or censure. The effect of this is to make the workmen suspicious of the fairness of this machinery for adjusting disputes on the railroads and thus to prevent the accomplishment of the end which the same organs profess so strongly to desire—namely, submission by the railroad unions to the mandates of the Labor Board.

However successful the conference on October 26th may be in causing the withdrawal of the strike order, the public must not continue to live in a fool's paradise. The issues that precipitated the break this time will remain and will appear to plague the country later, unless steps are taken to settle the matter clearly and fundamentally now. The only difference between a strike now and a strike next spring or next summer is that the unions are much more likely to win the one they would call later. That is a fact which even the railway executives seem to grasp. But they are wrong in thinking that a victory at the present time will mean any more to them than a short breathing spell. The unions in the railroad industry may conceivably be beaten; but a victory over them can by no stretch of the imagination hope to have the same permanent effects as were realized by employers in the steel industry, or in the packing industry, or in West Virginia. The lesson of trade unionism has sunk too deeply into the mind of the railroad workman to be eradicated easily by the loss of one strike.

The problem for the country will remain, as it was before, the search for a constructive and long time railroad policy which does not place the burden for financial instability, for mismanagement, for the depression, and for excessive competition in the past and in the present upon the shoulders of the workingman. For years both capitalist and socialist press have pointed to the financial and industrial breakdown of the American transportation system. No single fact about American industry is likely to meet with more general acceptance than that. Yet after years of discussion, after an invaluable experiment in public operation in which many important lessons were learned, Congress evaded its responsibilities and left the problem unsolved. Even such a moderate program of railway control as that embodied in the recent report by W. Z. Ripley on railway consolidation, is allowed to sleep and is not considered pertinent to any of the issues now challenging our attention. Until then this administration or the next appears with a comprehensive transportation policy, which it is ready to adopt, it should not be surprised if it is exposed again to strike orders from the Brotherhoods or from other railroad unions.

Keep the Excess Profits Tax

FOR two years the American public has been belabored with propaganda directed against the excess profits tax and the high surtaxes on large incomes. But the revised tax bill as it will probably be passed by Congress falls measurably short of satisfying the opponents of these fiscal measures. The abolition of the excess profits tax has been put off until January 1, 1922; while the surtax rates on large incomes have been reduced to a maximum of 50 percent instead of 32.

If the people knew the facts concerning the excess profits tax Congress would never abolish it; public opinion would not permit it. The opposition to the tax which was strong twelve months ago had been formulated on the basis of propaganda rather than upon authoritative information. Since that time some information has become available, and in consequence the revised tax bill gives evidence of returning sanity. The longer these taxes continue in force the more information will we have concerning the earnings of corporations and the effects of a tax upon differential profits. Even the opponents of the measure admit its theoretical soundness. They oppose it on grounds of practical expediency and administrative difficulty. Fortunately the revised tax bill, if it passes, will extend our experience for one year more, and so afford us information concerning the effects of the tax in times of depression as well as prosperity.

In the original stages of the propaganda against

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the excess profits tax it was to be abolished because it raised prices, and because there could be no decline in prices until the tax had been expunged from the statute books. This argument made a universal appeal, since everybody wanted the prices of other peoples' products lowered, and was anxious, therefore, to see this elevator of prices abolished. Presently someone pointed out that there were disturbing facts which did not harmonize easily with the glib theory that the excess profits tax was the cause of the rising price level. Wholesale prices had already risen 60 percent before America entered the war, and 80 percent before we imposed this tax. In 1919 the tax rates were so greatly reducd that the excess profits tax collections fell from $2.5 billion to $1.5 billion, but prices continued to rise steadily until in May, 1920, they stood at 272 percent of the pre-war level. Then, without any reduction in the tax rates they fell precipitately to 148 in June of this year. It is preposterous to ask the people to believe that the excess profits tax was the primary cause of these fluctuations. The economist had held for a century past that a tax on differential profits had no effect upon prices. Common sense has come to the support of his analysis.

With the collapse of their most appealing argument, the opponents of this tax increased their emphasis upon the remaining criticisms which have been brought against it. The simplest of these was that with the passing of war profits its yield would decrease rapidly and would become negligible compared with the expense of administering it. This prophecy may now be tested. The year 1920 was certainly not one of unusual profits. The ruling that the corporations might report their inventories at the market price rather than at cost operated to throw a large part of the loss through price declines against the profits of that year. Yet the collections of income and excess profits taxes indicate that corporations will pay a round billion dollars of excess profits taxes on account of the year 1920. This is in addition to some seven hundred million of corporation income taxes. Even for the depression year of 1921 the outlook is for four hundred million dollars of taxes from this source. With returning prosperity and with inventory losses adjusted to the lower price level of this year, 1922 should see the yield from the excess tax well above five hundred million dollars. A source of revenue derived entirely from profits above eight percent upon invested capital which yields over half a billion dollars in times of peace will never be lightly relinquished by a democracy.

The Senate Finance Committee, in its majority report, announces curtly that "the time for discussion is past; and the time to repeal the tax has arrived." The Committee admits its theoretical merits, but insists that "in practice it exempts the over-capitalized corporation, falls more heavily upon corporations of small or moderate size than upon larger corporations, penalizes business conversatism, and places upon the Bureau of Internal Revenue tasks which are beyond its strength."

The Committee publishes a table in support of its statement that the tax falls more heavily upon small corporations. This is an old argument, and the facts need a little more analysis than the Committee furnishes. The 115,000 corporations which it presents had an invested capital of $56,000,000,000. Thirty-two thousand five hundred of these earned less than ten percent upon their invested capital, which was $30,000,000,000, or about $900,000 apiece on the average. The remaining 82,500, earning from ten to one hundred percent, had a little over $300,000 of invested capital on the average. From this the Committee deduces the conclusion that the line of demarcation between the corporations which pay excess profits taxes and those which do not is one of size.

Upon analysis the figures presented reveal some disturbing possibilities. For example, 7,743 corporations which made between twenty-five and thirty percent had an invested capital of almost four billion dollars. Obviously this group may well include three corporations whose invested capital averaged one hundred million dollars; ten with fifty millions each; thirty others of twenty million each; seven hundred of one million each; and seven thousand which averaged approximately two hundred and forty thousand dollars each. The other groups are likewise large enough so that the same sort of diversity in size may exist among the corporations which compose them. Thus the group which made between thirty and forty percent represented $2.4 billion of invested capital. The group which made fifty to seventy-five percent had $487,000,000 of invested capital.

While the public has no way of determining exactly how many corporations with an invested capital of one hundred million dollars or over made large profits and paid large income taxes, it does know that the great mass of excess profits taxes were paid, in the year to which the Committee refers, by corporations with large incomes. The Treasury publication, "Statistics of Income," for that year shows a total of 202,000 corporations reporting net income. Of these 69,000 had net income of less than $2,000 and therefore paid nothing; and 79,000 other corporations whose in-

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comes were less than $10,000 paid excess profits taxes of about $200 on the average. Obviously these 148,000 companies were for the most part small corporations. Obviously, too, more than one-half of them were omitted from the Committee's tabulation.

The total excess profits taxes paid in that year amounted to $2,505,000,000. More than three-fourths of this, or $1,955,000,000, was paid by 4,251 corporations reporting $250,000 or more of net income. Two percent of the corporations reporting net income, therefore, bore the lion's share of the tax burden. They were evidently large corporations. In the face of these published figures is the public still to believe the Committee's statement that the tax falls more heavily upon small corporations than upon large ones?

Nor does the talk about the break-down of the Bureau of Internal Revenue carry conviction. It has succeeded in collecting $6,500,000,000 of excess profits taxes alone in four years, and promises to collect almost half a billion dollars next year. The Senate Finance Committee estimates that it will collect in addition over $500,000,000 in back taxes during the next two years. It is difficult to refrain from parodying Lincoln's utterance concerning whiskey-drinking generals.

It is true that the present law favors the over-capitalized corporation; but this is not an inherent defect of the tax. This shortcoming calls for amendment and not for abolition. The amounts involved for the government are so large that it is quite warranted in incurring the expenditures necessary to determine the invested capital as accurately as may be. No private corporation would hesitate to spend ten times as much as it will cost the government to attain substantial justice in this matter. Once a fair invested capital is established for each corporation as of some date in the past, it is a simple matter to keep accurate records of the capital added.

It is amazing that the corporations themselves so little realize the effect which the proposed tax revision will have upon the greater number of them. If the excess profits tax is abolished the corporation income tax will surely be increased to fifteen percent. Any concern that is not earning more than ten and one-half percent on its invested capital will pay more under the new corporation income tax than under the present excess profits law. Practically all public utility corporations, the majority of the banks, and a large number of mercantile and manufacturing establishments will fall in this class. What the revision really amounts to, as far as the business interests of the country are concerned, is a shifting of the burden from people who are making more than ten and one-half per cent to those who are making less.

Even this year there are companies earning more than thirty percent on their invested capital. Within a fortnight the columns of the New York papers carried the following financial item which illustrates the effect of abolishing the excess profits tax.

> The . . . Company is attaching much importance to the proposed tax changes because of the expected benefits to accrue to it. If the tax is changed to 15 per cent on net profits, which is the rate proposed in the new bill now before Congress, it is estimated that earnings available for dividends on the present common stock in 1922 will be equivalent to over $42 a share. For example, in 1918, when profits available for the common were $2,810,999, taxes amounted to $1,250,000, whereas on estimated earnings for next year of $5,000,000 taxes are forecast at $771,000.

This company earned $3,500,000 before taxes in 1919, and the same amount in 1920. Its invested capital is approximately $15,000,000; and its taxes last year were, in round numbers, one million dollars. Under the excess profits law as it now stands this company will pay over $1,500,000 in profits and income taxes. The abolition of the excess profits tax would relieve the company of more than half of its taxes, and would shift a large portion of that amount to the public utility corporations and others whose earnings are far less than eight percent on their invested capital. Such a change violates the dictates of justice and of sound economic policy.

By all means let us have the facts concerning profits and incomes and the taxes paid on account of them. For the more clearly Congress and the public understand the facts, the less will be the likelihood of abolishing this tax.

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A Parting of the Ways for America

I

THE realities of American policy in China and toward China are going to be more seriously tested in the future than they ever have been in the past. Japanese papers have been full of protests against any attempt by the Pacific Conference to place Japan on trial. Would that American journals were full of warnings that America *is* on trial at the Conference as to the sincerity and intelligent goodwill behind her amicable professions. The world will not stop with the Pacific Conference; the latter, however important, will not arrest future developments, and the United States will continue to be on trial till she has established by her acts a permanent and definite attitude. For the realities of the situation cannot be exhausted in any formula or in any set of diplomatic agreements, even if the Conference confounds the fears of pessimists and results in a harmonious union of the powers in support of China's legitimate aspirations for free political and economic growth.

The Conference, however, stands as a symbol of the larger situation; and its decisions or lack of them will be a considerable factor in the determination of subsequent events. Sometimes one is obliged to fall back on a trite phrase. We are genuinely at a parting of the ways. Even if we should follow in our old path, there would none the less be a parting of the ways, for we cannot consistently tread the old path unless we are animated by a much more conscious purpose and a more general and intelligent knowledge of affairs than have controlled our activities in the past.

The ideas expressed by an English correspondent about the fear that America is soon to be an active source of danger in the Far East are not confined to persons on foreign shores. The prevailing attitude in some circles of American opinion is that called by President Hibben cynical pessimism. All professed radicals and many liberals believe that if our course has been better in the past it has been due to geographical accidents combined with indifference and with our undeveloped economic status. Consequently they believe that since we have now become what is called a world-power and a nation which exports instead of importing capital, our course will soon be as bad as that of any of the rest of them. In some quarters this opinion is clearly an emotional reaction following the disillusionments of Versailles. In others, it is due to adherence to a formula: nothing in international affairs can come out of capitalism and America is emphatically a capitalistic country. Whether or not these feelings are correct, they are not discussable; neither an emotion nor an absolute formula is subject to analysis.

But there are specific elements in the situation which give grounds for apprehension as to the future. These specific elements are capable of detection and analysis. An adequate realization of their nature will be a large factor in preventing cynical apprehensions from becoming actual. This article is an attempt at a preliminary listing, inadequate, of course, as any preliminary examination must be. While an a priori argument based on a fatalistic formula as to how a "capitalistic nation" must conduct itself does not appeal to me, there are nevertheless concrete facts which are suggested by that formula. Part of our comparatively better course in China in the past is due to the fact that we have not had the continuous and close alliance between the State Department and big banking interests which is found in the case of foreign powers. No honest well-informed history of developments in China could be written in which the Russian Asiatic Bank, the Foreign Bank of Belgium, the French Indo-China Bank and Banque Industrielle, the Yokohama Specie Bank, the Hongkong-Shanghai Bank etc. did not figure prominently. These banks work in the closest harmony, not only with railway and construction syndicates and big manufacturing interests at home, but also with their respective foreign offices. It is hardly too much to say that legations and banks have been in most important matters the right and left hands of the same body. American business interests have complained in the past that the American government does not give to American traders abroad the same support that the nationals of other states receive. In the past these complaints have centred largely about actual wrongs suffered or believed to have been suffered by American business undertakings carried on in a foreign country. With the present expansion of capital and of commerce, the same complaints and demands are going to be made not with reference to grievances suffered, but with reference to furthering, to pushing American commercial interests in connection with large banking

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groups. It would take a credulous person to deny the influence of big business in domestic politics. As we become more interested in commerce and banking enterprises what assurance have we that the alliance will not be transferred to international politics?

It should be noted that the policy of the open door as affirmed by the great powers—and as frequently violated by them—even if it be henceforth observed in good faith, does not adequately protect us from this danger. The open door policy is not primarily a policy about China herself but rather about the policies of foreign powers toward one another with respect to China. It demands equality of economic opportunity for different nations. Were it enforced, it would prevent the granting of monopolies to any one nation: there is nothing in it to render impossible a conjoint exploitation of China by foreign powers, an organized monopoly in which each nation has its due share with respect to others. Such an organization might conceivably reduce friction among the great powers, and thereby reduce the danger of future wars—as long as China herself is impotent to go to war. The agreement might conceivably for a considerable time be of benefit to China herself. But it is clear that for the United States to become a partner in any such arrangement would involve a reversal of our historic policy in the Far East. It might be technically consistent with the open door policy, but it would be a violation of the larger sense in which the American people has understood and praised that ideal. He is blind who does not see that there are forces making for such a reversal. And since we are all more or less blind, an opening of our eyes to the danger is one of the conditions of its not being realized.

One of the forces which is operative is indicated by the phrase that an international agreement on an economic and financial basis might be of value to China herself. The mere suggestion that such a thing is possible is abhorrent to many, especially to radicals. There seems to be something sinister in it. So it is worth explaining how and why it might be so. In the first place, it would obviously terminate the particularistic grabbing for "leased" territory, concessions and spheres of influence which has so damaged China. At the present time, the point of this remark lies in in its implied reference to Japan, as at one time it might have applied to Russia. Fear of Japan's aims in China is not confined to China; the fear is widespread. An international economic arrangement may therefore be plausibly presented as the easiest and most direct method of relieving China of the Japanese menace. For Japan to stay out would be to give herself away; if she came in, it would subject Japanese activities to constant scrutiny and control. There is no doubt that part of the fear of Japan regarding the Pacific Conference is due to a belief that some such arrangement is contemplated. The case is easily capable of such presentation as to make it appeal to Americans who are really friendly to China and who haven't the remotest interest in her economic exploitation.

The arrangement would, for example, automatically eliminate the Lansing-Ishii agreement with its embarrassing ambiguous recognition of Japan's *special* interests in China.

The other factor is domestic. The distraction and civil wars of China are commonplaces. So is the power exercised by the military governors and generals. The greater one's knowledge, the more one perceives how intimately the former evil is dependent upon the latter. The financial plight of the Chinese government, its continual foreign borrowings which threaten bankruptcy in the near future, depend upon militaristic domination and wild expenditure for unproductive purposes and squeeze. Without this expense, China would have no great difficulty henceforth in maintaining a balance in her budget. The retardation of public education whose advancement—especially in elementary schools—is China's greatest single need is due to the same cause. So is the growth in official corruption which is rapidly extending into business and private life.

In fact, every one of the obstacles to the progress of China is connected with the rule of military factions and their struggles with one another for complete mastery. An economic international agreement among the great powers can be made which would surely reduce and possibly eliminate the greatest evils of "militarism." Many liberal Chinese say in private that they would be willing to have a temporary international receivership for government finance, provided they could be assured of its nature and the exact date and conditions of its termination—a proviso which they are sensible enough to recognize would be extremely difficult of attainment. American leadership in forming and executing any such scheme would, they feel, afford the best reassurance as to its nature and terms. Under such circumstances a plausible case can be made out for proposals which, under the guise of traditional American friendship for China, would in fact commit us to a reversal of our historic policy.

There are radicals abroad and at home who think that our entrance into a Consortium already proves that we have entered upon the road of reversal and who naturally see in the Pacific Con-

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ference the next logical step. I have previously stated my own belief that our State Department proposed the Consortium primarily for political ends, as a means of checking the policy pursued by Japan of making unproductive loans to China in return for which she was getting an immediate grip on China's natural resources and preparing the way for direct administrative and financial control when the day of reckoning and foreclosure should finally come. I also said that the Consortium was between two stools, the financial and the political and that up to the present its chief value had been negative and preventive, and that jealousy or lack of interest by Japan and Great Britain in any constructive policy on the part of the Consortium was likely to maintain the same condition. I have seen no reason thus far to change my mind on this point, nor in regard to the further belief that probably the interests of China in the end will be best served by the continuation of this deterrent function. But the question is bound to arise: why continue the Consortium if it isn't doing anything? The pressure of foreign powers interested in the exploitation of China and of impatient American economic interests may combine to put an end to the present rather otiose existence led by the Consortium. The two stools between which the past action of the American government has managed to swing the Consortium may be united to form a single solid bench.

At the risk of being charged with credulous gullibility, or something worse, I add that up to the present time the American phase of the Consortium hasn't shown perceptible signs of becoming a club exercised by American finance over China's economic integrity and independence. I believe the repeated statements of the American representative that he himself and the interests he represents would be glad if China proved her ability to finance her own public utilities without resorting to foreign loans. This belief is confirmed by the first public utterance of the new American minister to China who in his reference to the Consortium laid emphasis upon its deterrent function and upon the stimulation it has given to Chinese bankers to finance public utilities. And it is the merest justice to Mr. Stevens, the American representative, to say that he represents the conservative investment type of banker, not the "promotion" type, and that thus far his great concern has been the problem of protecting the buyer of such securities as are passed on by the banks to the ultimate investor —so much so that he has aroused criticism from American business interests impatient for speedy action. But there is a larger phase of the Consortium concerning which I think apprehensions may reasonably be entertained.

Suppose, if merely by way of hypothesis, that the American government is genuinely interested in China and in making the policy of the open door and Chinese territorial and administrative integrity a reality, not merely a name, and suppose that it is interested in doing so from an American self-interest sufficiently enlightened to perceive that the political and economic advancement of the United States is best furthered by a policy which is identical with China's ability to develop herself freely and independently: what then would be the wise American course? In short, it would be to view our existing European interests and issues (due to the war) and our Far Eastern interests and issues as parts of one and the same problem. If we are actuated by the motive hypothetically imputed to our government and we fail in its realization, the chief reason will be that we regard the European question and the Asiatic problem as two different questions, or because we identify them from the wrong end.

Our present financial interest in Europe is enormous. It involves not merely foreign governmental loans but a multitude of private advances and commitments. These financial entanglements affect not merely our industry and commerce but our politics. They involve much more immediately pressing concerns than do our Asiatic relations, and they involve billions where the latter involve millions. The danger under such conditions that our Asiatic relations will be sacrificed to our European is hardly fanciful.

To make this abstract statement concrete, the firm of bankers, J. P. Morgan & Co., which is most heavily involved in European indebtedness to the United States, is the firm which is the leading spirit in the Consortium for China. It seems almost inevitable that the Asiatic problem should look like small potatoes in comparison with the European one, especially as our own industrial recuperation is so closely connected with European relations, while the Far East cuts a negligible figure. To my mind the real danger is not that our big financial interests will determine to set out upon selfish exploitation of China: intelligent self-interest, tradition and the fact that our chief asset in China is our past freedom from a predatory course, dictate a course of cooperation with China. The danger is that China will be subordinated and sacrificed because of primary preoccupation with the high finance and politics of Europe, that she will be lost in the shuffle.

The European aspect of the problem can be made more concrete by reference to Great Britain

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in particular. That country suffers from the embarrassment of the Japanese alliance. She has already made if sufficiently clear that she would like to draw America into the alliance, making it tripartite, since that would be the easiest way of maintaining good relations with both Japan and the United States. There is no likelihood that any such step will be consummated. But British diplomacy is experienced and astute. And by force of circumstances our high finance has contracted a sort of economic alliance with Great Britain. There is no wish to claim superior virtue for America or to appeal to the strong current of anti-British sentiment. But the British foreign office exists and operates apart from the tradition of liberalism which has mainly actuated English domestic politics. It stands peculiarly for the *Empire* side of the British Empire, no matter what party is in the saddle in domestic affairs. Every resource will be employed to bring about a settlement at the Pacific Conference which, even though it includes some degree of compromise on the part of Great Britain, will bend the Asiatic policy of the United States to the British traditions in the Far East, instead of committing Great Britain to combining with the United States in making a reality of the integrity of China to which both countries are nominally committed. It does not seem an extreme statement to say that the immediate issues of the Conference depend upon the way in which our financial commitments in Europe are treated, either as reasons for our making concessions to European policy or on the other hand as a means of securing an adherence of the European powers to the traditional American policy.

A publicist in China who is of British origin and a sincere friend of China remarked in private conversation that if the United States could not secure the adherence of Great Britain to her Asiatic policy by persuasion (he was deploring the Japanese alliance) she might do so by buying it —through remission of her national debt to us. It is not necessary to resort to the measure so baldly suggested. But the remark at least suggests that our involvement in European, especially British, finance and politics may be treated in either of two ways for either of two results.

In this article I have set forth as conservatively as possible some of the reasons which seem to justify reasonable apprehension regarding our course at the Conference and in the future. In a further article I shall set forth the reasons for hoping that our ways will not part in this direction, and the main factor that seems to me involved in our deliberate entrance upon a better course.

JOHN DEWEY.

Sold

PERHAPS yours is one of the million or so of families that have this summer been visited by a smooth young man with a sales prospectus hidden under his coat and a glib way of gaining his entrance and your name by seeming a taker of the school census. Perhaps when he left with your deposit in his pocket and an easy, "I'll thank you today and you thank me a year from today," you may have sat back and wondered how it all happened. Or perhaps you interrupted him savagely (as one lady interrupted me) when, with mounting enthusiasm, he brought out his sample.

"What are you trying to do?" she thundered, "sell me a book?"

Following the company's instructions to the letter, I duly smiled and registered that I was puzzled at being so misunderstood. "Mrs. Brown," I said with confidence, "Mrs. Brown, I am explaining these helps-for-children to the mothers; when I am through they can get them for their children or not, just as they please."

"Oh," said Mrs. Brown, plainly relieved. The difference to Mrs. Brown between "selling a book" and "explaining helps-for-children" is truly remarkable.

And if you happen to be that particular Mrs. Brown, you will recall that by the time I showed you the signatures of your subscribing neighbors and added magnificently, "Of course, some are choosing them in one binding and some in another —which would you choose?" you chose with the utmost docility. When I left, you thanked me heartily, and if you thought at all of the nice young man who had played with your baby and paid a sincere compliment to a lovely trifle of furniture (and incidentally had taken away with him sixteen-ninety of your husband's hard earned cash in full payment for an "educational work" to be delivered next week) you probably said, "It's a gift, —he's a born salesman."

But he is not. The slogan is now: "Salesmen are made and not born." And they are made at a wonderful rate. From the ranks of the college men comes their summer horde. Some "demonstrate" aluminum, some "take subscriptions" for maps as a "community enterprise," and some "place educational works." But their method is much the same; every word your salesman said to you he had memorized from a book of instructions (affectionately called the Little Brown Jug), every night by its direction he practised before his mirror the art of paying "graceful whole-souled compliments about the children, unique pieces of furniture, books, rugs, and vases."

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His little personal touches, the amusing anecdote of his mother with which he clinched a point, even the angle at which he crossed his legs, and the distance he stood from the door when you answered the bell, he was taught in a week's training in New York.

It used to be the custom for men "earning" their way through college to knock at your door and ask you to help them out by buying something. Times have grown more brisk. They now step up (according to their instructions) "with all the confidence of a sheriff who has walked from nine counties to see you," and in six cases out of ten they force you to buy. How? By meanly playing upon your love of your children and your human interest—as well as your vanity. "Use and interest the child," says their instruction book, "ask him questions. In the end, after you have reminded him that a number of his school-mates are to have the work, it will be an easy matter to get him to ask his mother for it."

All through the sales-talk Mrs. Brown is given the picture of her son James enjoying and using the book. Here are some well calculated phrases:

"Good morning. Are there any children of school age in this home?"

"Yes. James Brown, aged twelve, seventh grade."

"I'm Mr. Washburn, Mrs. Brown. There is a matter concerning James's school work that I am to explain to you." (In case of difficulty here) "If I may step in from the door-step."

"Do you expect James to attend High School?"

"Yes." (With elaboration.)

"That's fine. We certainly have a good High School. May I ask, Mrs. Brown, have you recently visited James's school?"

"No, I'm too busy."

"Most mothers have plenty of work to do. At least mine always has."

"One boy said there wouldn't be so many blue pencil marks on his composition, now that he is to have the use of these helps. How about you, James?" (After explaining the English section.)

After the geography: "One boy said, 'It's just like having a teacher at your elbow all the time.' I don't know how James would like that, do you, Mrs. Brown?" (With a laugh.)

"Have you noticed, Mrs. Brown, the great men who had good mothers?" (Opening to biography.) "Benjamin West, the great artist, said, 'A kiss from my mother made me an artist.' Our great Lincoln said, 'All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.' You see, Mrs. Brown, it was the mother's encouragement that made them ambitious to win the battle of success. When Garfield was working along the canal, his mother was so poor they had difficulty in getting enough to eat. But she was never too poor to buy him a few good books, and to that, more than any other one thing, did he owe his success in life."

"One mother said that, inasmuch as she was poor, she felt it her *duty* to give her children a good education because with a good education and a fair name they can succeed very well in the world. She said, however, that if she kept putting it off until everything else was out of the way, her children would be grown up and gray haired before that time would come."

"She asked me if I couldn't have her copy sent to her about six weeks ahead, so that she could save up a bit each week and then have it. That time would be better for you, wouldn't it, Mrs. Brown?"

"I guess so."

"Thank you, Mrs. Brown, this is the place for your name." (Holding pencil point right on the page for subscribers.)

Mrs. Brown has now simply added her name to a list on a blank sheet. She is really under no obligation, but the salesman goes ahead arranging the delivery date, while he fills out a receipt just as though he had received Mrs. Brown's deposit. This receipt he tears out 'with a snap' and hands over, saying, "We are authorized to collect but two dollars. This is your guarantee and receipt." Quickly he pushes back his chair and is busy writing up his order book. Mrs. Brown must not be allowed to catch his eye, or she might protest. Feeling that nothing but her own stingy self stands between her James and this mountain of delight and benefit, she finally bites hard,—and gets the money.

Taking advantage of peoples' weaknesses is mean enough, but to thus use their beautiful instincts, to constantly turn the mother's sacred love for her child into hard cash for the pocket, grew to be a bit too much for my stomach; after a week of it I quit.

The contest was too uneven; the 'prospect' didn't begin to have a sporting chance. The company had classified all the objections she could possibly make to the proposition ("excuses" it called them), and had given the precise method of turning each. The 'Put it off' and the 'Other Book' are not as hard to overcome as the 'Can't Afford'; while the 'Husband' excuse is the most amusing. A wife will say her husband attends to money matters; a husband will say his wife attends to the children. "When selling to a mother," advise the experts, "show her how her children

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will benefit; when selling to a father, show him how the book will be of service to himself. Then he will say, 'Yes, that would be fine for the young folks'—and buy."

How a credulous and pitiably polite population is to defend itself against a salesmanship ruthless and informed by the discoveries of modern behavioristic psychology, is something of a puzzle. Especially difficult it is in the case of the exploitation of the rural counties (the "de luxe" territories, as they are known in the trade), where the farmer's wife, with perhaps a good grade-school education, must match her wits against a college man who has the resourcefulness and confidence—if not the culture—of his social background.

Yet, the college man does not realize what he does; he signed his contract with the company as the result of a sales-talk as nicely contrived as the one he now gives, and his morale is kept up by regular personal letters and a little weekly magazine wherein he may find his name on the Honor Roll. The propaganda that keeps him in the field is as good as the best that the Home Offices supply in war time, and it serves its purpose: it keeps him fit. It dwells on the romance. "They are 'in the heat of the battle' all the time, and the flush of success is never allowed to cool. They are 'in motion' six days in the week, and they do not lose their 'momentum'." The affair is a great game of matching wits against wits, of constantly enlarging one's power to wheedle and to bully, of constantly growing in the knack of going just a little farther with people than you had ever dreamed possible—and of getting by.

While the exploitation of school superintendents and ministers may be not one whit less mean than the exploitation of the ignorant, it has the sting somewhat removed, and is better sport; it is beyond question humorous to watch the overbearing Reverend Dr. Smythe swallow the same hook that has caught Mrs. Smith, his humble washer-lady.

"Remember," our salesman has been instructed, "remember that you cannot be a good salesman and forget you are a missionary." When he arrives in town, he goes direct to a minister. Greek meets Greek. The rules for bullying parsons are outlined, beginning with paragraph twenty-four of the Little Brown Jug. "You are seated in the office or parlor. In a deliberate and forceful manner, with your eyes constantly on his, begin the explanation of your business, following with the description of your prospectus. Don't let the fact that he is a teacher, minister, or person of prominence overawe you, cause you to act timidly, or with less assertion than you would use with other individuals." If our salesman is reasonably enthusiastic, his minister will volunteer a good word now and then, just to be polite. If the good word be indeed a bon mot, the salesman will quickly hand over his sample with pencil in position on a blank page. "Would you just jot down what you have said, Dr. Smythe?" If the Reverend Doctor objects, he is reminded of his duty to help his flock choose a good thing. (Has he not already admitted this to be such?) The Little Brown Jug continues, " 'Now, Reverend Smythe, I suppose I can have the work delivered?' (Pause and watch him closely for evidence of what he is thinking of doing. If you have been given reasons to believe that he is going to take the work, you need not at first offer the discount in fact some resent such a proposition, but if you see the discount is necessary, offer it.)"

" 'Now, Reverend Smythe, if you will kindly suggest the names of a few of your acquaintances who might be interested in a work of this kind, I will be very glad to call and let them see it.' (Pause, ready and expecting to write down the names. Be very courteous.)"

"Do you know any nice people who *occasionally* take someone to stay with them?" (A salesman has more prestige if he stops with a private family, of course.)

Armed with the names of one or two, he seeks room and board. Having found a place to his taste, he first pays a compliment to his prospective landlady. "You certainly have a lovely home, Mrs. Brown." Then, after a moment, "What rate could you make me?"

"This," said the instructor in New York, "has the tendency of squeezing off the last nickel."

Our salesman sells the landlady a book, and proceeds to gather information. "Act the part of a jovial, appreciative listener, capable of holding your point and asking the same question in a number of ways, and you will soon have the lady's gossiping instinct thoroughly aroused."

"In case you need clothing of any kind, go to a merchant and look over the things you want to get. Try to catch him when he is not busy, and after having looked over his goods, say, 'Now I have taken time to look at these goods, and they suit me provided we can make a deal. I should like you now to take a little time to look at mine.' Then pull your prospectus from your pocket and give him a short, brisk canvass, right to the point, and make a deal with him if possible. You again score a point by adding another important name to your list and securing the article you wanted without paying cash."

Truly, salesmanship may be called the latest of

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the Fine Arts. "But what will happen," I asked of my instructors in New York, "when most everyone has been trained in modern salesmanship? How will all the tricks work then?" They only smiled.

"Por la boca muere el pez," says the Spanish proverb.

But for the more immediate future, my friends often ask if there is no way to confound the next salesman who comes to them in this spirit. The easiest way is to use expressions with the negative connotations that he consciously avoids. Speak of books, book-agents, husband, money, wife, buy, sell, sold, hard times, bills, taxes, salesmen, disease, and death.

ROBERT COLLYER WASHBURN.

Britain, France and Germany

IF Russia be left aside, there are, and have been for the last three years, two outstanding problems in the public life of Europe. The first is the problem of restoring the industrial productivity of a continent which contains some hundred million more inhabitants than it can support out of its own natural resources. The second is the problem of the appeasement of France and Germany, or, to put it in the only form in which it ought to be conceivable to an Englishman, the establishment of a real understanding between Britain, France and Germany. This is indeed the crux of the political difficulties of the whole continent and, when its influence on the armaments question is considered, perhaps one may say of the whole world. If it can be solved, the League of Nations will go forward unimpeded and a variety of constructive international projects, which are impracticable in the present atmosphere, can be taken up with good hope of success. So long as it remains unsolved, Geneva will of necessity remain a backwater, for the manoeuvring and vicissitudes of British, French and German statesmanship will continue to absorb the attention, and to cloud the prospects, of the European peoples.

No one can spend even the shortest time in east central Europe without realizing that the mutual relations of the three great western powers are a matter of even more vital interest to Prague and Belgrade and Budapest than they are to London, Paris and Berlin. If Anglo-French cooperation can be maintained, and Germany brought into a satisfactory relationship with France and Britain, the Succession States will be relieved of their worst anxieties and uncertainties and their statesmen will have leisure and scope to set their households in order. But if there were a rupture between London and Paris, if the Supreme Council were to break up in disagreement, no other effective European authority as yet exists to enforce peace. The immediate result would be to encourage minorities and mischief makers throughout the area covered by the Treaties—more especially the Hungarian Treaty—to emulate the exploits of d'Annunzio, Zeligowski and the Burgenland freebooters. The complete breakdown of authority which threatened the eastern half of the continent in 1919 could no longer be averted.

East of Switzerland—I had almost said east of the Rhine—every wise man is today a conservative. Liberals who seek, by tongue or pen, to loosen the too fragile cooperation which at present bears the responsibility for the peace of Europe, perhaps even for the continuance of European civilization, should realize what they are doing. In times such as these protestantism is not enough. Men must tolerate much that they dislike in order to avoid worse evils. All the more need, therefore, to concentrate attention on the major problems from whose solution alone can a change in the whole situation be expected.

It is customary in England and also, it would seem, in the United States to consider the problem of Franco-German relations as insoluble, and to regard distrust and hatred between the two countries as an unalterable political fact. The signing of the Loucheur-Rathenau agreement should lead to a revision of this too hasty conclusion. There are great and serious obstacles, both practical and psychological, to Franco-German cooperation; but it is not beyond the range of possibility, and there are not a few Frenchmen, some of them in very responsible positions, who see in it the only way out of the difficulties in which France is involved. When the Upper Silesian question, the last big outstanding decision left over from the Peace Conference, has been disposed of, this tendency will become more marked, and Englishmen, always slow to realize the trend of foreign opinion, may awake to the fact that the establishment of a Franco-German understanding, with Protectionist Britain left out, is a more important

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factor in the life of Europe than the deepseated enmity which was supposed to render such an understanding impossible.

Such a development would be a disaster, not only for Britain and for the whole English-speaking world, but also for Europe. Despite her ever-recurring fits of parochialism, England is, and must always remain, a part of Europe. Moreover, she forms the natural link between Europe and America; and that England should stand aloof from the continent at a time when all good Europeans are praying that America should draw closer, would seem like a reversal of the order of nature.

There is one way, and one way only, in which the distrust which has grown up between Britain and France can be dissipated and the relations between both and their former enemy established upon a basis of confidence—by going back to the clauses of the Treaty in which the main difficulty, that of reparation, takes its rise. There is one clause in that Treaty which every honest man knows to be indefensible. It is the clause by which Pensions and Separation Allowances are made part of the German liability. The insertion of this clause was insisted on by Mr. Lloyd George, so we have been authoritatively told, and was reluctantly agreed to by Mr. Wilson in the face of the unanimous opinion of his advisers. It added to the German bill a sum of some fifteen thousand million dollars, about equal to the estimated amount of the legitimate German liability for "damage to the civilian population of the Allies and their property." A large part of this sum is payable to the British and Dominion governments, whose claims under the "damages to civilians" formula, accepted by the Allies on November 5, 1918, are, of course, very much less than those of the French. Moreover these claims have already been met in large part by the handing over of German shipping to replace the British losses by submarines.

It is not practicable to revise the Treaty of Versailles. It would involve too cumbrous a procedure and would lead to too much uncertainty and manoeuvring. The times are not propitious in Europe for a second and warmed-up Paris Conference. But what is practicable, and what would meet the chief moral need, both on the German and the French side, is a public declaration by the British government that it does not intend to benefit by the provisions of the Pensions and Separation allowances clauses (Article 232, Annex I, clauses 4, 5 and 6) and is prepared to reconsider the allocation of the payments henceforward made by Germany in the light of this decision. Under the present arrangement, arrived at, after a long process of bargaining, at Boulogne last year, France receives 52 per cent and Britain 22 per cent of these payments; the revision of the basis of claim would mean a substantial increase in the amount available for France, as also for Belgium and perhaps, for Italy. At the same time the waiving of the British claim under the Pensions clauses would lead to an easing of the total German burden, with incalculable effects upon the economic life of Germany and of the whole continent.

It may, perhaps, seem out of place to put forward this proposal in an American journal; nor would I do so had I not already put it before my own fellow countrymen. But at a time when the reparation problem is the master key, both to the recuperation of Europe and to the prosperity of America, and when acute business minds everywhere are seeking a solution upon the existing unsatisfactory basis, it seems a duty to point to the underlying moral issue which can and must be faced if real relief is to be found. I am not ashamed to repeat in America what I have often told my own countrymen face to face: that the financial clauses of the Treaty involve a violation of a solemn international agreement, the agreement of November 5, 1918, and that the main responsibility for their insertion in the Treaty rests with Great Britain. I believe that if British opinion thoroughly understood the simple legal and moral facts involved, it would insist on wiping the slur off its record; and it is because American opinion weighs powerfully with my countrymen that I do not shrink from raising the matter here.

But there is a further reason. A proposal has lately been made from an influential quarter in this country that America, instead of demanding the repayment of her debts, or of simply cancelling them, should, by agreements with the governments concerned, constitute them into a number of trust funds the income of which is to be applied, in the first instance, to pensions for war-widows and war-orphans, and then to various subsidiary educational activities. It is not for me to express an opinion on what is exclusively an American matter. I would only remark that the suggestion comes very opportunely at a moment when it is becoming evident, both on moral and economic grounds, that we ought not to look to Germany to meet this element of the cost of the war. Let Germany meet frankly and whole-heartedly, as she now seems inclined to do, the liability for reparation which is legitimately hers, the full extent of which the ghastly tragedy of Oppau is

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helping her to realize. If she will do that she will find that the true underlying French mood is not one of bitterness or vengeance but of sorrow —a sorrow that, in the passage of months and years, can be mingled with her own, as North and South have mingled theirs here in America. And let Britain, discarding the shopkeeping mood into which she was betrayed in 1918 and 1919, return to her traditional policy of straightforwardness and fair play, and she will find that she has regained the respect of Europe and the power to act as a disinterested mediator in Europe's troubles and as a trusted interpreter between her peoples and the great English-speaking world overseas.

ALFRED E. ZIMMERN.

America Discovers Itself

> Whence came all these people! They are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed that race now called Americans has arisen. . . . Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigor, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle.—J. Hector St. John de Crèvecœur, in Letters from an American Farmer, 1782.

WHOSE country is this anyhow?

Twelve percent of the American army in the World War was of Italian origin; five percent was Jewish; ten percent was Negro; five percent was Polish; twenty percent was Irish, according to unofficial analysis of the official records. In the proportion of foreign immigrants it differed very little probably from the army of George Washington.

"The composition of the American [Revolutionary] army after 1776 at least," says Edward Channing,* ". . . reflected the heterogeneity of the American population. As there were Englishmen, Scots, Irishmen, Germans, Dutchmen, Frenchmen, and Jews among the colonists, so there were representatives of all these nationalities in the American regiments. Soldiers of the Pennsylvania line, at the time of the mutiny in 1781, were mainly descendants of the Scotch-Irish and German immigrants to that province in the first half of the century. A study of muster rolls shows a large proportion of foreign names in the regiments of almost every state. . . . There certainly were many, very many, foreign immigrants in the American regiments."

* History of the United States, Volume 3, pages 219-220.

Who, after all, is your hundred per cent American? Can it be possible that there has been an error in hypothesis as well as in tactics in our vigorous efforts at Americanization? Some of our foreign born think so. "That strong-arm Americanization" which "aspired to transform overnight our foreign population into descendants of those who landed on Plymouth Rock," wrote a young Czechoslovak recently to the New York Times, "meant the same as Russification to the Pole, Germanization to the Czech, and Magyarization to the Slovak."

"It was," said an Americanized Scot, "as though I should meet you all at a garden party and should say, 'This is my place. It's the biggest and finest estate in the world. I want you to behave yourselves in it. This is the finest music in the world that my band is playing. This ice cream I am giving you is the best ice cream made.' You would gather in knots behind the bushes and say, 'What an insufferable snob our host is!'

"That is what some of our foreign born are thinking. That's no way to make Americans: to say, 'Hey, you miserable worm, wash out your dirty foreign traditions and fill up with real Americanism.'

"So long as we are a nation of immigrants, all of us, whether from 1492 or from 1921, the way to make America the best of the nations of the world is to discover, recognize and encourage the best traits of all the races which make us what we are."

This view of America as a composite nation, of Americanization as a reciprocal process comes to a show-down in New York City the first two weeks of November. The exposition called America's Making will be a demonstration and a celebration of the distinctive contributions of immigrants of all origins throughout three centuries to our national life. Officially invited by the Governor of New York state, by the Mayor of New York City, by the State and City Departments of Education, thirty-two racial groups of New York City, —Armenian, Belgian, Carpatho-Russian, Czechoslovakian, Danish, Dutch, English, Esthonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hispanic, Hungarian, Icelandic, Irish, Italian, Jugoslavic, Lettish, Lithuanian, Negro, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Rumanian, Russian, Scottish, Swedish, Swiss, Syrian, Ukrainian, Welsh,—together for the first time under one roof, are the exhibitors.

What can they exhibit? They can show almost every phase of our history, our industry, and our culture to be the composite work of immigrants. Such certainly was the civilizing of our territory. Dutch and Swedes, and far more widely and ten-

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aciously the English, fastened their characteristic hamlets upon our Atlantic promontories. Spanish missionaries outfacing massacre and famine irrigated the deserts of New Mexico, Arizona and Texas, and originated in California one of the noblest of American architectural types. Frenchmen in the silent heart of a forest continent, planted the first brave wheatfields in nine of our present states of the Mississippi basin. Scotch-Irish, English, Welsh and Germans overbroke the Appalachians. Norwegians, Swedes and Finns have hewn their way through our Northwest.

Every phase of our life today bears them witness. Our universities still show the differing types laid down by their first English and Scottish and Welsh founders. The first school laws were written by the English; the first public elementary schools were kept by the Dutch. And our kindergarten was initiated by a German immigrant, Mrs. Carl Schurz.

In colonial days especially, immigrants' industrial talents were highly diversified according to racial or national origin. One group possessed secrets utterly unknown to the others in Europe, but which here in America sooner or later passed into the common fund. Our windmills, for instance, were introduced by the Dutch, our first stoves cast by German immigrants. English colonists founded our fisheries and floated our merchant marine. Scotch-Irish pioneers planted our first potatoes, Spaniards our first oranges and lemons. Frenchmen showed the rest of us the use of yeast.

Even today when we are apt to think of immigrants' economic contributions as quantitative rather than characteristic, certain distinct gifts are nevertheless apparent, such as the pearl-button industry brought in by the recent Czechoslovaks, and the improved dairying methods introduced by the equally recent Danes. In the field of labor also the differentiation holds. It is Norwegians and Swedes who clear our forests, Irish and Italians who dig our subways and spade up our railroads, Jugoslavs who work our Pacific Coast fisheries, Poles who recultivate our abandoned New England farms.

If it was the Dutch who gave us our New Year's Day celebration, and introduced us to Santa Claus, it was the English who made our first Thanksgiving. And principally to our present Italians we owe the holiday that marks Columbus's landfall.

Both by stationary exhibit and by various forms of dramatic entertainment these things and many others the exposition of America's Making will show. Through the majestic windows of a room from old New Orleans, with their intricately wrought railings, still the admiration of American craftsmen, the French, for instance, will slyly introduce glimpses of wharves piled high with sugar and cotton, symbolic of those agricultural industries which they first established, to the prosperity of Louisiana. Meanwhile a sponge diver from the Florida coast and cigarette-making machinery of special design will demonstrate industries developed here by the ingenuity and labor of yesterday's Greeks.

Scottish and Negro choruses singing Annie Laurie and Old Black Joe, Swedish athletes showing the gymnastics and the dances which they have made integral parts of our school and playground programs, the Irish dramatizing their part in the Civil War, all these things are but the spectacular earnest of certain main types of racial contributions. All these are but the intellectual and emotional agents of a new concept of Americanism, an Americanism shared, cooperative, mutually respectful.

Whatever may be their effect upon the spectator, press and public, there is already no doubt of the reaction of the participating groups, not alone those thousands of their representatives actually engaged upon the festival, but in most cases their press, their organizations and their churches throughout the country. For the first time, barring Liberty Loan and Red Cross drives, many of the newer immigrant elements are asked to take a constructive group part in an American enterprise. Their inward-tending group life, so often even here centring upon old-country factional disputes and shut off from us in a kind of defensive pride, has been given an outlet into the common life of their new nation.

They have taken it eagerly. All of them are completely financing their parts in the exposition, in these times when any financing is more than usually difficult. In many cases this has been done from the small donations of working people and without any large individual gifts. In addition, ten of the thirty-two groups are preparing and publishing special books to state more fully than any exhibit can their part in America's making. Time after time representatives of all groups have met at dinner conferences, occasions which in genuine comradeship and community of purpose put the League of Nations to shame. Tactically there seems no question as to the superiority of this method over the Mayflowerizing of other days. It quickly reaches large groups of immigrants on their line of least resistance; it brings them into comprehended and logically functioning positions in our national structure. It stimulates their pride in their own uses and in the country of which their service is a part.

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That is the movement's present, its human, its Americanizing value. But it has another also in the equable glow which it has suddenly cast for all of us upon this country's history, whose stage has been so primly set and spotlighted these many years in the text-books of our schools. Heroic figures long hidden in the wings will have to be trundled out. Fiery Scotch-Irish advocates of liberty, Spanish monks daring as grimly and proselyting as patiently as ever a Pilgrim Father, Dutch colonists establishing religious tolerance though witches were hanging at Salem, Irish troops sticking out the Revolution, may occasionally relieve some of the better known principals in our drama, while New Orleans and the Golden Gate might be alternated with such wellworn pieces of scenery as the stern and rockbound coast.

Meanwhile, unobscured by irrelevant properties, emerges in its true gigantic character that solid framework of our life which we owe to our English stock,—the whole form of our government to its smallest detail, our language, our fundamental law, trial by jury, the legal beginnings of our educational system.

These are not the emendations of the carping historian. They are the common assumption of the pupils of five hundred and ninety New York City public schools, who for over a year through their own research in the libraries, through the composition and rehearsal of pageants which they too are giving in celebration of America's Making, have been coming to a new conception of our life and of our destiny.

America's Making has been the impetus to a kind of higher criticism of our history. With its challenging revelation of multiple authorship, it has brought to the hackneyed pages a quickened understanding, a nearer pride. It has made our past and our future ours indeed.

EUNICE FULLER BARNARD.

Obregon in Mexico

THE Mexican situation has never been more serious than today. Under the Obregon administration our sister republic is passing through dangerous waters: there is some risk of shipwreck. Obregon himself is a well-meaning man. He is not truly great, either in thought or character. He is simply the best man in sight for the President of Mexico.

That Obregon falls short of true greatness is shown by many recent incidents. The wine of power has already mounted to his head. He is no longer the Sonora governor of simple tastes and manners. Some of the writers of Mexico today dwell upon his yielding to luxury, depicting him as a veritable sybarite surrounded by all the elegancies and refinements. That people generally attribute gross superstition to him is shown by the emphasis they place upon his refusal to live in the castle of Chapultepec—the palace of Maximilian and the favorite home of Porfirio Diaz and Francisco I. Madero. That Huerta would not live there surprised no one, but what wandering ghost that haunts the place terrifies the doughty Obregon? Finally his scant realization of his tremendous responsibilities as President appears frequently in his addresses. Thus at Cordoba he is said to have referred to critics blaming his errors in some such terms as these: "We are proud of our mistakes: mistakes show our goodwill. If we make mistakes, we can rectify them afterwards." But in the present crisis some mistakes may prove fatal. There are errors that cannot be retrieved and just at present opportunities for irretrievable errors in Mexico are many.

His position is serious. He occupies the centre of a triangle; at one angle is the government of the United States, playing for advantage; at the second are two watchful members of his Cabinet —Plutarco Elias Calles and Adolfo de la Huerta; at the third is the Mexican people,—hopeful, anxious, suspicious. Any one of the three, or all three together, may undo him. If he placates or pleases one, he runs the chance of irritating or displeasing the others.

Consider us and our point of view. We are strenuous and unyielding. We set invariable minima, which we insist must be accepted. Our demands assail the very foundations of Mexican sovereignty. We withhold recognition unless articles 27 and 123 of the constitution of 1917 are abrogated or seriously altered. If we have the right to dictate Mexican fundamental law today, we have equal right at any future time to interfere in her policies. But such dictation and interference not only inflict wounds upon her national sovereignty; they carry with them the assumption of responsibilities which we should be slow about accepting. Again, we talk much about the guaranteeing of American lives and property. Yet American lives and property are not secure on our own soil. What can we do, what do we do, what shall we do, when every day wanton destruction of both

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takes place in every state of the Union? Are no American lives and properties assailed elsewhere? Upon what other nation do we make such strenuous demands? What guarantees do we give to Japan, to China, to Italy, that their nationals shall be secure in this country? When we commit outrages upon them, there is no blustering demand for reparation. No—the cases are taken up, each as it arises, and are settled after regular diplomatic discussion and agreement. There is no sound reason for proceeding differently with Mexico. Every case of outrage on either side should be carefully examined, the circumstances should be considered, the adjustment should be fair and the decision firmly enforced.

At the second angle of the triangle are Plutarco Elias Calles and Adolfo de la Huerta. They occupy the two most important positions in Obregon's Cabinet—the ministries of gobernacion and hacienda (treasury). It was an open secret that de la Huerta, during his provisional presidency, became distrustful of Calles and Obregon. At that time General Benjamin Hill was still alive and his name was ever associated with that of Calles in popular suspicion. Death has taken don Benjamin, and on the whole Mexico breathed more freely after he was gone. Now Obregon is in power and Calles and de la Huerta are his helpers. They are not likely to act against him until he makes some blunder. When he does that, they will "pronounce" and take the field against him. Talking with an impetuous old stage horse in Mexican politics, now quite out of politics and public life, I brought up the name of Plutarco Elias Calles. There was an immediate outburst. "Ho! *he* will kill the other man: you will see." That is surely frank and to the point. Later in conversation with a foreigner, who has taken a more active part in Mexican revolution than was to be expected, I quoted this explosion and awaited the reaction. "Very likely," was his response. Nor will the fact that the error or mistake is made by one or other of these two ministers make any difference. The moment it is recognized as an error, the combination will act against Obregon. He will not only pay the penalty of his own mistakes; he will pay the penalty of their mistakes, to them and through them. For instance, if de la Huerta, acting as minister of hacienda, gives way to the oil magnates and a storm of popular disapproval arises, its fury will be vented upon Obregon, but the leaders of the avenging movement will be don Plutarco and don Adolfo.

At the third angle of the triangle sits the Mexican people—watchful, anxious, nervous and uncertain, near hysteria. Do not misunderstand me. The Mexican people is not an organized, self-conscious, intelligent, educated and informed population. The vast majority of its 15,000,000 individuals are ignorant, uninterested, easily deceived, easily misled. By the expression here is meant the group of intellectuals, the thinkers, the writers, those who really have some appreciation of nationhood and some interest in the fate of their country. These are awake as never before. They are intensely concerned and anxious. They justly feel that the present moment is critical. They know that important questions, vital issues, are being settled not only without public discussion, but without the people knowing what is done. Thus, they are deeply anxious and suspicious of the conference that took place early last month with the oil magnates. No one knows what was done there. No one even knows what matters were discussed. They are suspicious that de la Huerta sold out the interests of the nation. Neither in Mexico nor in this country has authoritative information been given out. We are told indeed that the magnates returned happy and smiling and it is said that Mexican oil securities went up five points. There is nothing in these news items to allay the worst suspicions.

As an example of the uncertainty and suspicion of the popular mind, take Mr. James W. Gerard's visit. He and Judge Gary were in Mexico in September. The leading newspaper of Mexico announced that Mr. Gerard came to attend the Centennial as President Harding's personal representative. The next day the same paper denied the statement. Far from being President Harding's representative he came in a private capacity, to look after personal business interests. He represented the other political party. He could no more act as Harding's personal representative than Candido Aguilar (son-in-law of the murdered Carranza) could act as Obregon's personal representative. Soon after it was announced that Mr. Gerard was going to visit his mining properties and had demanded an armed escort for his protection, from the government. Then, just when the escort might reasonably have been ready, Mr. Gerard was quoted in an interview regarding Obregon and the government, which in fulsome praise was almost worthy of Doctor Dillon, and then suddenly and unexpectedly, without visiting his properties, he left for the United States. It was then surmised that he was hurrying back to make his private report to the American government or to the interests that sent him. Of course Mr. Gerard is free to come and go as he pleases; his errands are his own concern; he may or may not represent great interests or the government; but this fluctuation of opinion regarding him

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and his mission is symptomatic of the suspicious and agitated condition of the Mexican mind.

Mr. Thomas Lamont's visit was commented on in the same nervous and excited fashion. What is his errand? Is Mexico at last forced to go again to Wall Street? Is she really to fall into the hands of the international bankers? The same mystery and secrecy surround his coming and his errand that surrounded the oil conference. Now, as then, it is de la Huerta, who has the business in hand. I had an interview with him. The newspaper caricatures misrepresent him. He is a good deal of an Indian, but his lower face is weak, not strong—flabby, not firm. He is far from having the strong muzzle, which one sees in all the comic papers. He expressed his dislike for newspaper interviews: he avoids giving the publicity of print to his views and policies. Listening to him, we rather wondered whether the reason was not what we have often heard,—that he has neither views nor policies. After this expression regarding interviews and publicity he said: "My method is different; I work occultly, in secret, under the ground, like a mole." And he has the oil question, and coinage, and finance, and Wall Street loans, in his charge. Where has Adolfo de la Huerta gained the special knowledge and experience that qualify him to deal with these vital questions, with the skilled experts who represent American petroleum interests, and the great banking houses? And is his "method" calculated to disarm suspicion?

The suspicion of the Mexican people is crystallizing upon the subject of our recognition of the Obregon government. They believe we are trying to bribe, scare, or drive Obregon into betrayal of the national interests. They expect us to exhaust our resources in the effort. If we can not secure his acquiescence they believe it is our plan to back some one against him, some one whom we can handle, manage and direct. There are two men in sight, towards whom we are supposed to incline —Francisco Villa and Felix Diaz. From the constancy with which the latter's name comes up in this connection, he appears to be the more suspected. Their suspicions are not unnatural; it is to be hoped that they are unfounded. Neither Francisco Villa, nor Felix Diaz, nor Alfredo Robles Dominguez, nor Pablo Gonzales, has or can get a genuine following. Any one of them, backed by the United States, would be doomed to failure. For us to back any one of them against a recalcitrant Obregon would involve our protegé in ruin.

Obregon has already produced notable inprovement in the situation. He has practically wiped out armed resistance to the government. Well behaved travellers who attend to their own business can probably go with safety to any part of the Republic. Railroad service has been resumed; lines everywhere appear to be in operation. Sleeping cars now make regular runs between San Antonio, Texas and the City of Mexico. It is true that tracks, bridges, engines and rolling stock have sadly deteriorated during the eleven years of revolutionary waste and destruction. Railroad accidents are frequent. But if present tendencies continue, this important agency of reconstruction will steadily improve. Notable development has apparently taken place in the national army. Only a real test can prove its reality. Will it prove loyal to Obregon if he has occasion to call it out? Or has it been built for the use of Calles, or de la Huerta, or some as yet unknown general? Another achievement to Obregon's credit is the successful disbandment and disarming of revolutionary bands, with their subsequent location on agricultural lands, and the resumption of the arts of peace. This always difficult problem, he seems to have wisely settled. One of the great principles of "the revolution" has been the settlement of the agrarian problem. It must be dealt with. It is a problem that calls for wisdom and delicate handling. Under General Villarreal, within whose ministerial province that problem lies, it has been vigorously attacked. Progress has been made; we are not sure but what too rapidly. These are all real achievements. Obregon has done enough to deserve encouragement. For us to quibble, to make unnecessary demands, to delay recognition is bad policy. It weakens him, it aids the forces against him, it raises the danger that we shall later have to deal with a man less strong, less well disposed, less capable.

FREDERICK STARR.

Ghost

I'm comin' back and haunt you, don't you fret.
What if I get as far as Hell away?
They's things of me that just can't help but stay—
Whether I want or not, you can't forget.

Just when you think you got me wiped out clear,
Some bird that's singin'—moonlight on a hill—
Some lovely thing 'll hurt like it would kill,
And you'll hear somethin' whisperin', "He's here!"

And when somebody holds you closet, like this,
And you start in to feel your pulses race,
The face that's pressin' yours 'll be my face..
My lips 'll be the ones your lips 'll kiss.

Don't cry . . . which do you think it 'll hurt most?—
Oh, God! You think I want to be a ghost? . . .

JOHN V. A. WEAVER.

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A COMMUNICATION

Train Service Workers Underpaid

SIR: From a comparison of the present wages of train service employees with the cost of living index it would appear that most classes of these workers who are threatening a strike are not at present overpaid, but that many of them, on the contrary, are now receiving less in real wages than they did in 1915, which was the first year when adequate statistics of earnings of various classes of employees were compiled. With this fact once established it is not strange that the proposal for a further reduction of ten per cent in wages is meeting with vigorous protest.

This fact becomes at once apparent upon the examination of the accompanying table. In the first column is listed the average annual compensation of the several classes of train service employees in 1915. These figures were obtained from reports of the Interstate Commerce Commission covering all Class I railways.

The second column gives the average annual compensation of each class of employee as it should be to cover the present increased cost of living. The present index of the cost of living on a 1915 basis presents some difficulties. In December, 1914, the Bureau of Labor Statistics index stood at 103. A year later it was 105.1. The mean figure of 104, therefore, is taken as the index of the year. The latest Bureau of Labor Statistics index in 1921 is 180, for May, but we have the index of the National Industrial Conference Board to show that the cost of living in September was practically the same as in May, so we can safely use 180 as the present index.

	Average Annual Compensation in 1915	173 Percent of 1915 Average	Present Compensation (Estimated)	Percentages of Decreases July 1, 1921
Yard Enginemen	$1528	$2643	$2255	8.9
" Firemen	916	1585	1684	11.3
" Conductors	1358	2349	2138	9.2
" Brakemen	1169	2022	1833	9.8
Road Freight Enginemen	1846	3194	2625	8.3
" " Firemen	1136	1965	1837	10.8
" " Conductors	1589	2749	2353	10.0
" " Brakemen	1036	1792	1730	12.5
Passenger Enginemen	2141	3704	3042	7.4
" Firemen	1287	2227	2223	9.6
" Conductors	1850	3201	2771	8.6
" Brakemen	1026	1775	1869	12.0

This index, however, is based on 1913 and no adequate reports on compensation of railway employees are available for that year. We have, therefore, to make 1915 our base (100 per cent) year and with that year as a base, the present cost of living carries the index of 173. The average annual earnings for 1915 were, therefore, multiplied by 173 to arrive at a fair basis for present compensation, and the results are shown in the second column.

The present annual compensation of the various classes of employees was derived from reports of the Interstate Commerce Commission covering the quarter ended June 30, 1921, just prior to the decreases in wages which went into effect on July 1. Each figure shown in the third column of the table was obtained by multiplying the average hourly earnings of that class of employees for the second quarter of 1921 by the average hours worked per month, multiplied by 12 to secure an annual basis, subtracting from that result the decrease ordered by the Railroad Labor Board effective July 1. The percentage of this decrease in the rates of each class of employees is shown in the fourth column.

It is apparent from this table that all classes of train service employees with the exception of yard firemen and passenger brakemen are now on a lower standard of real wages than in 1915. Another point that must be considered in analyzing present wages is that, due to the surplus of available employees and to slack business, the men are not employed to the full extent of their time and, even with the same rate, their earnings are consequently diminished. This may explain to some degree the obstinacy of the men in refusing to hear of a further reduction.

The method of paying train service men is rather complicated. In through freight service, for example, an employee is paid on the basis of 100 miles or eight hours, which is the guaranteed minimum day. If the division over which he operates is more than 100 miles in length, the time basis for his division in increased one hour for each additional 12.5 miles. For example, if the division is 150 miles in length, he is paid on the basis of 150 miles or 12 hours. A through freight conductor receives $5.80 for a "run" of 100 miles. If the run is 150 miles he will receive $8.70 for his work, but he may be kept on duty for twelve hours in order to secure this sum. The popular opinion is that trainmen receive overtime pay after eight hours. They do not, unless their run is only 100 miles. They receive overtime pay only if the average speed of their trains is less than 12.5 miles an hour. Since train service employees are paid on a mileage basis, it is obvious that some such safeguard as overtime payment is necessary in order to provide adequate payment in case of exceptionally slow speeds. Overtime rates are not paid for Sunday or holiday work, and, indeed, employees in through freight service are forced to work every day unless they have permission to be absent.

The nature of the work of train service employees puts them in an unfortunate position during times of rising wage rates. During the war the wages of railway mechanics rose out of all proportion to those of train service employees. The reason for this is not hard to find. Railway mechanics have their value in other industries. Train men have not. Their skill, while of the highest order, is practically valueless in any industry other than the railroad.

K. T. G.

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CORRESPONDENCE

[The New Republic welcomes communications from its readers in regard to subjects of current interest, and especially concerning articles which have appeared in its columns. Those of 300 words or less are necessarily more available for publication than longer letters.]

American Policy in China

SIR: Your leader on America, Japan and Britain, together with Professor Dewey's article on Hinterlands in China (July 6th), have only just come to my notice, as I have but recently returned from a ten months' stay in China and Japan, where I was in close touch with educational and progressive factions and the Young China movement.

While I have no desire to enter into a competition in nationalism with Professor Dewey, whom I met on friendly terms in Peking, there are some facts and considerations which he, in common with the New Republic group, and all Americans that I have met in the Far East, refuses to face. Hypocrisy is a vice as markedly American as British, and in Anglo-American controversies a certain gentle cynicism is essential to an accurate reading of the statements of both sides. When, for instance, I read in the British press in Peking contemptuous denunciations of Sun Yat Sen's Canton "rabble," I inquired, "What have they done to annoy Hong Kong?" The Cassel agreement emerged. When per contra I found the American reviews almost fulsome in their praise of Cantonese integrity and heroism, I again attempted to dive below the surface. From American reviews (the Review of the Far East, etc.) and now from Professor Dewey's article it became evident that something was afoot, there "was a project" for the development of a new port on the Canton mainland, which would be a serious rival to Hong Kong, and which *could have been rendered useless* by the construction of a certain railway from Hong Kong, had the Cassell agreement held good.

At this point, as I am writing this letter and preparing to make my next critical guess, I am spared the trouble by getting news of the George H. Shank contract with the "Republic of South China" for a twenty years' monopoly of all the industrial resources of Canton province. America's moral indignation at the wickedness of Hong Kong is now fully explained.

But what is *not* explained is the attitude of the intelligent and liberal-minded Americans who read and who write your paper. Do they argue that it is a more virtuous act on the part of the foreign capitalist to impose a crushing monopoly on a young and progressive government than on the preceding one which Professor Dewey justly condemns as unrepresentative and corrupt? The Peking government, Canton's enemy-oppressor, is condemned on all hands as unrepresentative and corrupt, but American capital did not submit it to moral scrutiny when another monopoly contract was in question. America recently concluded with Peking a contract involving the monopoly of all wireless stations in China, and, when it was discovered that Peking, with the usual Chinese good humor, had previously granted a similar wireless monopoly to Japan, the American government hectored and bullied with notes stigmatizing this as an "unfriendly act" of the Chinese.

I write as one accustomed to believe that all weak governments are only "virtuous" or "wicked" according as they serve or oppose the imperial designs of the British government to which I am subject. I commend this attitude to liberal Americans anxious to keep watch on their own country's first steps in imperial paths.

But what is more important, I have the deepest respect and affection for the Chinese people; I seriously maintain that their ancient civilization is the equal of that which Europe and the United States have produced; whilst the civilization which young China imagines and is capable of evolving will be superior to ours and to yours. And I see in America, in the not at all distant future, as great a danger to this evolution and to Chinese integrity as Britain and Japan have ever been. "Our purpose in the Washington Conference," says your Mr. William Hard, "has not to do with the immediate liberating of China, but with rules for the management of certain matters in China pending its ultimate liberation." If American capital gets a firm grip, that "ultimate" will be a very long word.

DORA W. BLACK.

London.

[The main topic of Miss Black's letter and her warning to Americans are undoubtedly timely and needed. I hardly see how any fair statement of past facts as to the international relationships of the powers with China can deny that the course of the United States has been an improvement on that of the European powers. But the past does not guarantee the future; a good record might even become a cloak for future wrong activities. The theme suggested by her letter is discussed in another column.

The particular instances upon which Miss Black relies to illustrate her point do not seem so happily inspired. The personal portion of her letter is passed over; after all, Chinese are the most competent judges of whether one's activities in China and one's writings about it are inspired by genuine friendship for China or by a selfish nationalistic interest. The facts about the American wireless contract are readily accessible; it is the more remarkable that Miss Black should say what she does since its terms were published while she was in China. It was a contract for a special piece of work, the erection of particular wireless stations which would facilitate the much needed freer flow of communications between China and the rest of the world. There is not a monopolistic feature about it. The British government at once brought pressure to bear upon the Peking government to cancel the American contract, not because there was any specific British proposal to undertake the needed work but on the ground that it violated a monopoly agreement previously made in which British interests were involved. (The Japanese government later made a protest based on grounds of a Japanese monopoly.) According to my Chinese informants in Peking there *was* some 'hectoring and bullying,' but it was carried on by agencies quite other than that which Miss Black mentions. The American protest was addressed to the British Foreign Office, not the Chinese. Slightly more recondite investigation of facts by Miss Black would have revealed that some time prior to the signing of the British monopolistic contract, an American company made a similar monopolistic contract with the government of China—showing that big business is everywhere alike. But the American State Department informed both the Chinese government and the American company that the contract was contrary to American policy and would not be recognized by the American government. It does not require a mind peculiarly free from nationalistic bias to see the difference in this case between British and American attitudes; I fear Miss Black was imposed upon by those who are not so internationally minded as she is.

There is much the same kind of difference between the British Cassel contract in Kwantung Province and the American so-called Shank contract. Hongkong government interests stood back of the former, and its propriety has been officially affirmed in the British Parliament by an under-secretary of state. The American government promptly gave notice in Canton that it would not support or further the Shank company (incidentally a small American company of the Colonel Sellars type without any important financial connections) and gave similar advice to prospective American investors at home. Incidentally I may say that "respect and affection for the Chinese people" might show itself in a desire that the Chinese people of Kwantung should have a port of their own. It is arguable that it is in Chinese interest rather than American that south China should not be dependent upon a foreign power for commercial facilities. I hope I made no such absurd statement as that a Chinese port would be rendered *useless* by the Cassell contract, for the point is that it would have been rendered *impossible* of construction. But in any case the facts of the two instances cited by Miss Black show that up to the present the American policy is the opposite to that of Downing Street instead of similar. I hasten to add that this does not alter the value of Miss Black's general warning.—J. D.]

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A Stranger Within Our Gates

[Mrs. Glendower Evans has sent us the following letter for publication.—THE EDITORS.]

MY dear Mrs. Glendower Evans:

I was just thinging what I would to do for past my long days jail: I was saying to myself: Do some work. But what? Write. A gentle motherly figure came to my mind and I rehear the voice: Why don't you write something now? It will be useful to you when you will be free. Just at that time I eceived your letter.

Thanks to you from the bottom of my earth for your confidence in my innocence; I am so. I did not spittel a drop of blood, or steal a cent in all my life. A little knowledge of the past; a sorrowful experience of the life itself had gave to me some ideas very different from those of many other umane beings. But I wish to convince my fellow-men that only with virtue and honesty, is possible for us to find a little happiness in the world. I preached: I worked. I wished with all my faculties that the social wealth would belong to every umane creature, so well as it was the fruit of the work of all. But this do not mean robbery for a insurrection.

The insurrection, the great movements of the soul do not need dollars. It need love, light, spirit of sacrifice, idears, conscience, instints. It need more conscience, more hope and more goodness. And all this blassing things, can be seeded, awoked, growed up in the heart of man in any way but with robbery and murder for robbery.

I like you to know that I think to Italy, so speaking. From the universal famyly, turning to this humble son, I will say that, as far as my needs, wish and aspirations call, I do not need to become a bandit. I like the teaching of Tolstoi, Saint Francesco and Dante. I like the example of Cincinati and Garibaldi. The epicurean joi do not like to me. A little roof, a field, few books, rove food is all what I need. I do not care for money, for leisure, for mondance ambition. And honest, even in this world of lambs and wolves I can have those things. But, my father has many field, houses, garden. He deal in wine and fruits; and granaries. He wrote to me many times to come back home, and be a business man. Well, this supposed murder had hanswered to him that my conscience do not permit to me to be a business man and I will gain my bread by work his field.

And more: The clearness of mind, the peace of the conscience, the determination and force of will, the intelligence, all, all what make the man feeling to be a part of the life, force and intelligence of the universe, will be brake by a crime. I know that, I see that, I tell that to everybody: Do not violate the law of nature, if you do not want to be a miserable. I remember: it was a night without moon, but stary. I sit alone in the darkness, I was sorry, very sorry. With the face in my hands I began to look at the stars. I feel that my soul want goes away from my body, and I have had to make an effort to keep it in my chest. So, I am the son of Nature, and I am so rich that I do not need any money. And for this they say that I am a murderer and condemned me to death. Death? It is nothing. Abbominium is cruel thing.

Now you advise me to study. Yes, it would be a good thing. But I do not know enough this language to be able to make any study through it. I will like to read Longfellow's, Paine's, Franklin's and Jefferson's works, but I cannot. I would like to study mathematics, physics, history and science, but I have not a sufficient elementary school to begin such studies, especially the two first and I cannot study without work, hard physical work, sunshine and winds; free, blassing wind. There is no flame without the atmospheric gasses; and no light of genius in any soul without they communion with Mother Nature.

I hope to see you very soon; I will tell you more in the matter.

I will write something, a meditation perhaps and name it: Waiting for the Hanger. I have lost the confidence in the justice of man. I mean in what is called so, not of course, of that sentiment which lay in the heart of man, and that no infernal force will be strong enough to soffocate it. Your assistance and the assistance of so many good men and women, had made my cross much more light. I will not forget it.

I beg your pardon for such a long letter, but I feel so reminiscent to you that hundred pages would not be sufficient to extern my sentiments and feelings. I am sure you will excuse me. Salve. Give to all my best regards and wishes,

Your

BARTHOLOMEW VANZETTI.

The Air Mail Service

SIR: The Commission has before it a copy of the New Republic for September 28th. In it there is an article by Mr. Arthur Ruhl entitled It's a Temperamental Job! relating to the United States Air Mail Service. In this article, the Commission finds these passages:

"The Air Mail Service is three years old. It is included in the Civil Service and it is not easy to dismiss a mechanician, whether his work is satisfactory or not. A pilot is subject to the rules and red tape of the Post Office Department just as if he were a regular postman on a city route.

"This conventionality, on the one hand, and the entirely unconventional feelings which a single flight gave me, on the other, together with the gossip of the flying men, themselves, as I heard it for several days, leads me to the point which I wish to suggest here—that in incorporating the air mail in the regular postal service (a thoroughly desirable aim) we are likely to take too much for granted. There is a danger of forgetting that flying is not yet walking; that the dash, determination, and sensitive 'feel' which make a successful flyer are qualities not immediately translateable into bureaucratic conformity by the mere act of putting their possessors in the Civil Service; that risking one's life every day is a different job from lugging a mail pouch along a city street, and that the men who do it must, in some sort or other, be treated accordingly."

The Commission is in entire agreement with the main idea of Mr. Ruhl's article; that is, that men whose work is such that they must constantly risk their lives in its performance are entitled to every proper consideration. The Commission makes the point, however, that the fact that the Air Mail Service is "included in the Civil Service" (that is, the classified civil service, for that is the understood meaning of the term "civil servce" in the article) has nothing whatever to do with the temperaments of the pilots or their receiving or failing to receive the consideration due them.

It is stated in the article that "it is not easy to dismiss a mechanician, whether his work is satisfactory or not." The obvious point is that, being classified under the civil service law, mechanicians are somehow protected from dismissal even if they are not efficient. Just why such an impression as this should prevail in some quarters the Commission is unable to understand. There is nothing whatever in the organic civil service act, or in any of the other acts relating thereto, which hampers in any way an employing officer in the exercise of his right to dismiss an inefficient employee. The matter is entirely up to the department in which the man is employed. The Civil Service Commission has no power of questioning the act of the department in such a case unless it is alleged, with offer of proof, that the removal which has been made, or which it is proposed to make, is influenced by political or religious considerations.

When the Air Mail Service was first organized, pilots were excepted from examination under the civil service law and rules because the Commission was of the opinion that there were so few men in the country who possessed the requisite training and ability that the open competitive feature, which is a cardinal principle of the civil service law, could not be applied with good results. Later, however, when the war had developed large numbers of men trained in aviation, the Commission felt the competitive feature could be applied, and, accordingly, it now obtains.

The Commission is enclosing herewith a copy of the announcement of a recent examination for airplane pilots in the Air Mail Service. It will be noted that the examination consists of the subjects of (1) education, weighted at ten percent, and (2) experience, weighted at ninety percent. Certain minimum requirements in the way of training and experience must be met. That is all there is to the examination. It would, of course, be out of the question to attempt to secure airplane pilots through academic examinations in an examination room. To be eligible as an airplane pilot in the Air Mail Service, the applicant must show by competent evidence that he is an airplane pilot of certain attainments. That is all there is to it.

Now, may the Commission ask, what has all this to do with the temperamental features of the job, or the risk of life involved, or the treatment that the men think they ought to have after they are employed? If you wanted to employ an airplane pilot you would ask the applicants to prove to your satisfaction that they were airplane pilots. That is what this Commission does for the Air Mail Service, and that is what is required by the classification of airplane pilots under the civil service law and rules.

An airplane pilot or a mechanician in the Air Mail Service, or any other employee whose position is classified under the civil

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service law, may be removed immediately if he is not efficient, and the action of the department removing him is not subject to review by any person or persons whatsoever, except, as has been stated, in cases where removals are made for political r religious considerations. JOHN H. BARTLETT, President.
Washington, D. C.

[No one objects to the civil service examination for Air Mail pilots, and there is no direct connection between such an examination and the handling of the more "temperamental features of the job." Mr. Bartlett is quite justified in disclaiming any such responsibility.

The trouble at the flying end of the Air Mail service is not the examination, but a general atmosphere of which it is but a part. When a flying man, or a Field Manager, for instance, reads the civil service examination announcement which Mr. Bartlett has kindly enclosed with his letter, and learns that "applicants must not have reached their seventieth birthday on the date of examination," he does not necessarily jump off the dock at once, but he does feel a certain sense of remoteness on the part of the powers above (Civil Service, Post Office Department, or what not) which is not good for the best sort of team-work.

A pilot convinces himself—to take a hypothetical, but not untypical case—that his machine would fly better if the gasoline tank or the mail load were differently placed. The Field Manager sends in a recommendation, perhaps, to that effect. The suggested change may be wise or not, but it doesn't help much if some Post Office official, with little or no experience in actual flying, perhaps, without discussing the merits of the question, merely replies by calling attention to some conflicting general order issued months before.

While there may be "nothing in the organic civil service act" which hampers the dismissal of inefficient employees, it is a fact, nevertheless, as Mr. Bartlett seems to agree, that a contrary impression "prevails in some quarters." But that is a minor matter, at most. The real trouble, and the thing to which I wished to call attention in the original article, is the lack of what is easiest described as morale. Whatever its causes, it is a fact.

I would not be in a position, without further investigation, to make specific and detailed suggestions for improvement, but they would naturally be in the direction of a more responsive and flexible organization all along the line and one the personnel of which contained more flying men. The great benefit to be derived from the Air Mail is not, I take it, so much the mere rapid transportation of letters, as the development of pilots and the lessons to be learned by daily cross-country flights "regardless of weather conditions, and occasionally involving forced landings," as the civil service announcement puts it. This "temperamental job," and the flexible and changing art and science to which it contributes, calls for an organization behind it correspondingly flexible and quick to react.—ARTHUR RUHL.]

Four Russians Need Help

SIR: The people who have been interested in the case of Mollie Steimer, Jacob Abrams, Hyman Lachowsky and Samuel Lipman, the four Russians, who were given twenty years for protesting against military intervention in Russia, will be glad to know that according to a letter from the United States Attorney General, Harry M. Daugherty, the President "has expressed a willingness to commute the sentences upon condition that they be at once deported to Russia, never to return to this country, and provided also they bear the expense of their transportation to that country. If you can arrange this latter detail, action will be promptly taken."

The Attorney General has been informed that these expenses will be taken care of. In addition to the traveling expenses for the four Russians which will amount to about $1,000, friends of these prisoners realize the necessity of fully clothing these prisoners before they leave these shores, since they have already served two years in jail and have neither clothes nor funds.

The Political Prisoners' Defense and Relief Committee, S. Adel, Secretary, of 857 Broadway, New York City, is collecting funds for these purposes. It is expected that the prisoners will reach Ellis Island sometime after the 26th day of October, 1921, and, as soon as funds are collected, will be on their way to Russia, after a few days' stop at Ellis Island. Funds are immediately necessary. HARRY WEINBERGER.
New York City.

The Bandwagon

THE AMERICAN LEGION PRONOUNCES HIM GOOD

Early in the summer John J. Tigert was appointed Commissioner of Education of the United States by the President. Mr. Tigert was not well known to school people, and there was some question raised in various quarters about the method of appointing a successor to Commissioner Claxton, who had been in office under two administrations of different political complexion. The doubts of anyone who has come into close contact with the new commissioner since his appointment have been allayed by the good judgment and vigor which he has displayed in dealing with the problems of the Bureau of Education; and further acquaintance with his record brings out the fact, that while he starts without wide acquaintance with school people, he has a record of educational service with the army which makes him an acceptable officer to the American Legion.—*School Review, University of Chicago.*

THIS LITTLE DOG CAN BARK TOO

Charles Ashleigh is one of the hundred-odd I. W. W.'s who were sentenced for various periods for seditious activities during the war. According to his own story, Ashleigh had nothing to do with the I. W. W. after 1916 but had trained with them prior to that time, more as a sociological student than as an active worker. But he refused, out of loyalty to Bill Haywood and the other leaders, to ask for a separate trial, and consequently shared in the general verdict of guilty. He has still five years to serve. His poem is one of rare beauty and feeling. The man who wrote it has fine possibilities before him if he keep out of bad company.—*Current Opinion's Poetry Editor.*

THE SAME OLD BIRD

If Sacco and Vanzetti are innocent of the crime of which they once have been convicted, they are in no danger. They will get a new trial if the evidence soon to be offered in their behalf by competent counsel warrants the demand for one.—*Editorial in the New York Times, October* 24, 1921.

A bird of ordinary intelligence would get tired and ashamed of the old phrases; would want to add to his vocabulary, however limited; would desire some new form of speech to meet new charges.—*Editorial in the New York Times, same issue.*

LEADERSHIP

Just smile, that's what we want to do. Go to your golf this afternoon and to your offices Monday with a feeling of optimism in your heart. I say to you that in all my wildest dreams of forty years I have never built a plant that could meet the demand of this great nation.—*Charles Schwab addressing the Illinois Chamber of Commerce.*

A BIT OF GOOD LUCK

It is fortunate that Cornell's new leader comes out of the midst of the world's recent struggle; that he has seen Europe in ruins, and that he has thought long and deeply upon international relations, and upon means whereby the human race may be brought back to sanity and helped on toward its high destiny.—*A Cornell circular.*

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VERSE

A Song of War-Chariots

A poem written by Tu Fu who lived A. D. 712-770.
Translated by Witter Bynner and Kiang Kang-hu.

The war-chariots rattle,
The war-horses whinny;
To each man a bow and a quiver at his belt . . .
Father, mother, son, wife, stare at them going,
Till dust shall have buried the bridge at Hsien-yang.*
We trot with them and cry and catch at their long sleeves,
But the sound of our crying goes up to the clouds;
For every time a bystander asks the men a question,
The men can only answer us that they have to go. . . .
Some of them, at fifteen sent north to guard the river,
At forty were sent west to cultivate the border.
The mayor wound their turbans for them when they started out
And still they're at the front, though their turbaned hair is white,
At the front where the blood of men spills like the sea—
And still the heart of Emperor Wu is lifted up for war.
Do you know that, east of the mountain, in two hundred districts
And in thousands of villages, only weeds grow
And, though strong women plough, the rows are all broken? . . .
Soldiers of Ch'in can face arduous battle,
But their officers drive them like chickens and dogs.
Whatever is asked of them,
Dare they complain?
For instance, this winter
Held west of the gate,
Challenged for taxes,
How could they pay?
We have learned now that having a boy is bad luck—
And having a girl is very much better,
Who marries and lives in the house of a neighbor,
While under the sod we bury our boys. . . .
Go to the Blue Sea, look along the shore
At all the old white bones forsaken—
New ghosts wail there, together with the old,
Loudest in the dark sky of a stormy day.

Woods and Waters

The surf that wind can make of boughs,
The stormy grasses overthrown
Like crossing waves—how can these house
A sea their roots have never known?

They watch the tides of casual Springs,
Red Autumn rising on the hills,—
Not the relentless moon who swings
The ponderous waters as she wills.

Yet now their resonant rhythms sound
Like surges in a great, green shell,
Where the dead voices of the drowned
Mix with some broken buoy-bell.

BABETTE DEUTSCH.

* Now Hsi-an-fu.

Interim

I can conceive of Silence as it creeps
Over the world at evening, as it falls
On marbles marred where Desolation keeps
Court among crowns usurped and sunken walls.
I can imagine how the dead might come
Back to the splendor of their old estate,
Regal no less because their lips are dumb,
No less desired, no less importunate.

Such things have been; such things will ever be.
And yet I cannot think of you as one
Wedded so early to Antiquity—
A wind, a mist, a rainbow in the sun.
Silence and Sleep! . . . Who knows what unforeseen
Departures and farewells must come between!

LESLIE NELSON JENNINGS.

Castilian

Velasquez took a pliant knife
And scraped his palette clean;
He said, "I lead a dog's own life
Painting a king and queen."

He cleaned his palette with oily rags
And oakum from Seville wharves;
"I am sick of painting painted hags
And bad ambiguous dwarfs."

The sky is silver, the clouds are pearl,
Their locks are looped with rain.
I will not paint Maria's girl
For all the money in Spain."

He washed his face in water cold,
His hands in turpentine;
He squeezed out colour like coins of gold
And colour like drops of wine.

Each colour lay like a little pool
On the polished cedar wood;
Clear and pale and ivory-cool
Or dark as solitude.

He burnt the rags in the fireplace
And leaned from the window high;
He said, "I like that gentleman's face
Who wears his cap awry."

This is the gentleman, there he stands,
Castilian, sombre-caped,
With arrogant eyes, and narrow hands
Miraculously shaped.

ELINOR WYLIE.

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After the Play

WHY has one a partisan feeling for the Theatre Guild? I am not enamored of Ambush, Mr. Arthur Richman's new drama, and yet I feel deeply grateful to the Theatre Guild for producing it. Is it possible that with the Theatre Guild, as against Broadway, one feels that the creative mind is free?

The enslavement of the American mind is, I acknowledge, a large assumption, and for myself I cannot point to any central group that is enslaving it. All one knows is that the conformities of the crowd were organized openly and deliberately during the war, by newspaper and church and bank and magazine and college and movie; and this mechanism seems to be in excellent repair. A difficulty is revealed, at any rate, whenever the creative mind happens to oppose itself to current prejudice. In the popular magazine or on Broadway or in the movies one tends to get, as a consequence, a mechanical product, even if æsthetic sincerity always requires the non-mechanical. Hence, I suppose, one's gratitude for the Theatre Guild. One can begin analyzing its productions at the point where Broadway leaves off.

Granted that Ambush is serious drama, however, it can hardly be called significant. Mr. Richman has taken a difficult theme. He introduces us into the home of an elderly clerk living in Jersey City with his colorless wife and his fast daughter, and he has sought to dramatize the position of this high-minded, respectable father in relation to his girl. The girl, like the father, works in New York, but while she lives at home she is exceedingly impatient of the loving restraints that the father seeks to put upon her, and in her revolt against his gentle conventional discipline she has the support of her mother. Both mother and daughter have the view that life on the terms of the white-collar wage-slave is not worth living; and the mother is perfectly willing to see Margaret play around with wealthy young men who want sexual diversion.

The father has no idea what his daughter's code is. He imagines that she is seeing too much of people above her in station, but in the attempt to dissuade her he finds that she has been intimate with a "young millionaire," and on tracing back the excuse that this youth had promised to marry his daughter he learns that her story is a lie, that she has already been seduced by a boy of her own set, that she has been taking expensive presents from a smart young man and giving herself in return, and that she is as hard as nails. After the explosion it looks as if Margaret may change her mind about her wealthy admirers, but in the last act she is not only forging a new link with a married broker but in order to save the family from bankruptcy, due to unfortunate speculations by the father, she prevails on the father to take a job in her admirer's office at "ten dollars a week more," and even to take cash from the admirer to pay the rent. This the father does as the climax of the play, all his ideals going smash under the pressure of untoward circumstance, while he shakes his gray head and asks, "Why? Why? Why?"

In certain details Mr. Richman is successful. The process by which Walter Nichols learns that his daughter has deceived him is skilfully arranged, and one's interest is beguiled throughout. But to be beguiled is not enough. The play aims at moral significance. It tries to show how this unworldly father is caught in the net woven by his womankind, and is dragged to the depths. As Mr. Frank Reicher plays the part with extreme explicitness, Nichols is the good fool, meek in the awful discovery that his daughter is worthless and his wife acidly contemptuous of him. The unfortunate fact, however, is that Mr. Richman seeks sympathy for a creature who endures submission to no moral purpose. He is not a good fool but simply a fool. One's acceptance of this fact destroys the play. Granting that the pinched existence of a Jersey bookkeeper is unpleasant, its unpleasantness doesn't explain the father's becoming a pimp. The fact that he becomes a pimp is, in a way, pathetic, but it is also disgusting and this the dramatist evades.

Negative virtue, as I believe the holy priests call it, is one of the least inspiring qualities in the world. It is the principal quality of the clerk, Walter Nichols. When in the end he becomes the employee of the "swell" who is keeping his daughter he merely exposes himself as a worm. Why? For one reason because he can only keep his job so long as his employer keeps his daughter. No man with anything in his head of a better texture than wet wadding would be content to be such a pimp. I know it is humoristically assumed that clerks are of this character but the joke is a poor one. The real fact is that Mr. Richman has observed Walter Nichols sentimentally and in order to carry his point about the viciousness of Margaret he has taken away Walter Nichols's job at the crucial moment. Even if he had given him boils at the same time, however, one should have expected an "idealist" to be more Job-like than he is. His talk about being ambushed is sentimental mayonnaise to cover up a bitterly comic acquiescence.

One is interested in Margaret, the gold-digger (played vividly by Miss Florence Eldridge), with her defiant economic interpretation of life. Her values are completely vulgar and she is completely spoiled, but she is in the same class as Seymour Jennison, the vastly mouthy promoter who gets Walter Nichols to invest his savings in worthless oil-shares. Mrs. Jennison, like Walter Nichols, tries to uphold the banner of the ideal. While she is a living characterization (played by Katharine Proctor) and while Mr. Jennison (John Craig) is desperately realistic, the drama as a whole is false pathos—even in the days of the unemployed.

Mr. Booth Tarkington's comedy The Wren, now appearing at the Gaiety Theatre, is not serious enough to be called false. It is regular Broadway machine-made product which fills the soul with drizzle. Miss Helen Hayes stars in it as a professional cutie. Its note is wholesomeness, with a New England background. Seeby (Miss Hayes) is the inconspicuous heroine who keeps her naughty old father in order, rules the hired man with great severity, makes Cap'n Olds' Place spotless and impeccable and is adored on all hands. A Main Street vamp is the conspicuous bird in this little aviary. She is engaged in cooing Roddy, a young artist, away from the perch that Seeby had set for him. The vamp's husband, played by Mr. John Flood with his usual competence, intervenes at the proper time, and Roddy turns to the wren. The best thing about the play was F. P. A's comment that Miss Hayes was suffering from fallen-archness.

FRANCIS HACKETT.

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Ursula Trent

Ursula Trent, by W. L. George. New York: Harper & Bros. $2.00.

WHAT one likes about W. L. George is his courage. A man like Flaubert could write about the female heart, but how circumspectly and how haltingly. He proceeded with Madame Bovary as if he were a surgeon engaged in a beautifully delicate operation, and he gives one the sense that he makes no move, not the slightest, without faithfully sterilizing his instruments. How different is this later heart specialist. Observe him as he breezes into the intimacies of Ursula Trent. He regards it as sheer pedantry even to wash his hands. A pleasant odor of hair oil and stale cigarette smoke saturates the theatre in which he operates, and he expertly starts his carving with a knife that has recently been used for opening oysters. Does his subject squirm a little? He slaps more chloroform into her and pauses to light a cigar. The ashes that fall into her wounds he removes with a dextrous thumb, while he pauses to delight his audience with a witty anecdote. Then, in the light of countless probings and note-takings, he reveals what poor Flaubert had barely suspected—that every woman, God bless her, is at heart a rake, and that a new rake sweeps clean. This amazing disclosure, picked up from the manicure set and the prostitute set and the movie set and the night-lifers, proves how much the novel has advanced since it acquired some of the snappy characteristics of the topical review.

You must realize that Mr. George speaks in the first person singular of a modern aristocratic young Englishwoman, lapsing into the third person only when Ursula Trent of Ciber Court apostrophizes herself. "Yet, what a thing to happen to Ursula Trent, of Ciber Court, Burleigh Abbas," "Ursula Trent of Ciber Court, at the sight of her lover, lost all the instinct of an English gentlewoman," "Ursula Trent of Ciber Court couldn't borrow money from a man." You are not permitted to forget that the piquant adventures which Miss Trent narrates in detail happened to a—well, a baronet's daughter, not a clergyman's daughter. Of course she is unconventional. "You see, I'm not a nice girl, not really. I'm excommunicate." But Ciber Court, and the baronet, and "my people" in the Home Counties, are never quite allowed to fade out of the reader's hungry heart.

It is decidedly in Mr. George's line that he should inform us of his heroine's underclothes, but he does it with that happy humor which one misses so sadly in Flaubert. "I changed my underclothes much more often than a virtuous girl needs." The light touch! Preceded in the previous sentence by another light touch, in the perfect manner of the well-bred English girl: "Oh, cod's roe! I'm a pig, I can't help it; it's one of my forms of sensuality." These are the lifelike intimacies in which Mr. George abounds. His Ursula denies us practically no information, and omits no "honest" detail of the gay life. "There was no doubt about it. I had a head. . . . . Still, I got up. One's heart may break, empires may totter, but one must get up all the same, wash, eat, to sustain the life one doesn't prize." The ultimate truths.

But what elevates Mr. George as an interpreter of the female heart are the large generalizations with which Ursula sprinkles the book. "Now I was a woman again; I was material, and loved a thing or a man more than an idea. . . . Grapes when I'm ill, hats when I feel better, mille fleurs when I go out, and kisses at all times." The man is uncanny in his insight. "A woman finds it harder not to be wanted by a man than a man to be rejected by a woman." And why does a woman find it harder? "That's partly because she can't make advances, or thinks she can't. Also because a man, as a rule, can console himself with somebody else. A woman's too particular."

These are fair samples of Mr. George's wisdom. But his poignancy is partly in his verbal expressiveness. Ursula loves a male frock-designer, an irresistible Apollo, and she pours out her heart about his physical attractiveness. (It is still powerfully original to say that the male physically attracts the female). "Oh, I did love him; I couldn't help it. I know it was physical, but when he held me like that I couldn't resist him. Perhaps his beauty enthralled me even when I found him base. Even today, when I remember the smoothness of those golden waves under my hands, when for a moment a ghostly memory takes on a material form, and lips forgotten, but still fresh, seek mine, moist and desirous, carrying upon their firm lines a faint aroma of Egyptian tobacco, I tell myself that I love him still, wayward demigod, accidental demon. Lots of women go to their grave without loving, but I know what it's like. It's like having a fish-hook in one. It hurts, but you can't get it out."

Those who have never had a fishhook in them are usually interested in those who have been fishhooked, and this is the main explanation of Ursula Trent. Mr. George is engaged in telling the hungry hearts what it was like for Ursula to lose her virginity, to take a lover, to become pregnant as a great surprise, to find that her man-milliner is unfaithful, to escape, and at last, at thirty, to become "a young wife who loves her husband, who has emerged into happiness after much misery." "I love him enough to smile at him, to understand that he is my child. Every woman has a child on her wedding day." (Another example of what it means to Harper and Brothers to be "a noted feminist who has an uncanny understanding and knowledge of what women think and feel.")

Ruskin, Browning and the rest of the oracular Victorians must chiefly be thanked for the sort of thing that Mr. George purveys in Ursula Trent. When Ruskin wrote Ethics of the Dust he contemplated diamonds: "Well, those are the fatal jewels; native here in their dust with gold, so that you may see, cradled here together, the two great enemies of mankind,—the strongest of all malignant physical powers that have tormented our race. . . . Was any woman, do you suppose, ever the better for possessing diamonds? but how many have been made base, frivolous and miserable by desiring them? Was ever man the better for having coffers of gold? But who shall measure the guilt that is incurred to fill them?" After such monumental twaddle from the prosperous Ruskin, it is scarcely any wonder that the Georges come along with their knowing leer and smilingly tell an edified world that "most marriages are merely evidence that the girl has held out"; or "mainly I regarded him as a man who gave seats at the theatre, flowers, crystallized fruits; a woman must have that sort of man. What are we to do? We most of us have many desires and little money"; or "a day is so long without kisses"; or a

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life is so impossible without furs. This novel, in which the opium party is only one tid-bit, in which clothes are an obsession and a bore, elects to give its own Ethics of the Dust in a spirit which runs completely counter to Victorianism. And starved spinsters, I have no doubt, will read it avidly, feeling that this is Life.

It is as Life, at any rate, that Mr. George presents it, and not as art. As art the book is out of character and out of focus. It begins with the evident intention of portraying Ursula Trent as an English lady forced by her modernity to leave the restraints of Victorianism and learning the ways of life as an outcast. But the Ursula Quin of London is not a person of tradition striking out a new line. She is a glib Cockney with a journalistic twang and a style that is like a parody of H. G. Wells. By failing to convince one as a created character, nothing remains but the spicy subject-matter and the view of life. The view of life, as I have aimed to show, is diverting. The subject-matter is probably the best part of the entertainment. One learns a great deal about manicure girls and flats in Dover Street and the habits of Jewish movie magnates and the ways of a romantic architect. But the architect says that "in Botticelli's time people didn't swarm over Cimbue and Giotto," and the angry Ursula calls her lover "you cur! You little curled puppy? With your pretty ways and your lying tongue." So even here Mr. George is palming off pretentiousness on the stay-at-home hungry heart.

FRANCIS HACKETT.

Dante and the Modern Reader

The Vision of Dante, translated by H. F. Cary. New York: Oxford University Press. $1.75.

Britain's Tribute to Dante in Literature and Art. A Chronological Record of 540 Years, by Paget Toynbee. London: Published for the British Academy.

THE six hundredth anniversary of the death of Dante has brought forth a great deal of writing about Dante, but no indication that Dante himself is extensively read today. The Oxford University Press has sent us on this occasion a five-year-old copy of Cary's translation of the Comedy, well printed and admirably illustrated with Flaxman's quaint drawings. Cary's translation is now over a century old and it has rightly been ranked as an English classic since Macaulay's judgment that it is difficult to determine whether Cary "deserves most praise for his intimacy with the language of Dante or for his extraordinary mastery of his own." Men as diverse as Coleridge and Ruskin have admired it immensely and it has the honor of having been the only book that Keats took along with him on his journey to Scotland. But though Cary's language is genuinely poetical, it is not always clear and direct, and his notes are certainly diffuse and sometimes obsolete. It is a pity that the Oxford University Press could not have had those notes revised by some competent editor and printed at the bottom of the page, to help the reader over the numerous difficulties of the text.

Mr. Toynbee's book is just a bare catalogue of English (excluding American) adaptations, translations and important references to Dante, and of paintings that draw their themes from his work. It is a revelation of how impressive a mere catalogue can be. It certainly gives one an increased sense of the power of Dante to learn that he could stir men as diverse as Chaucer and Spenser, Sidney and the author of the Book of Martyrs, Milton and Gibbon, Gray and Byron, Shelley and Landor, Macaulay and Carlyle, Tennyson and Browning, and that painters as diverse in genius as Reynolds, Blake, Watts, Rossetti, Flaxman and Walter Crane could find their themes and inspiration in the Divine Comedy. No other foreign classic has found anywhere near a quarter as many translators. Yet despite all this and despite the numerous popular editions of the Comedy in the past, there are indications that Dante is today the exclusive possession of the few. Outside of Italy, where he occupies a national position, similar to that of Homer in ancient Greece, there is no evidence that he is read except by learned commentators, students of the past, or those engaged in the diverting but futile task of reading modern ideas into the work of one who was a rigid and narrow adherent of the mediaeval world-view.

I do not for a moment depreciate the value of those commentators whose philologic and historical research has helped to make the text of Dante more intelligible to us. But just as the labor expended by fond parents makes them apt to see too much in the wisdom which drops from the lips of their children, so the labor of fond commentators makes them hardly the soundest judges of the inherent wisdom in the text which they try to elucidate. Philologic and historic research do not guarantee sound literary taste or great moral insight. Thus it is not strange that passages of Dante are held up to our admiration which, to those who have not spent much labor digging them out, seem quite ordinary; and he is likewise held up as a great spiritual teacher because of doctrines as to the nature of sin and punishment, which are from the modern point of view most revolting.

The modern reader, whose interests are not primarily historical, and who wishes to see for himself the truth and beauty of the Divine Comedy, certainly has serious obstacles to overcome. The modern reader finds it difficult to enjoy the learned artificialities of the allusive or indirect style according to which things are described in charades the solution of which requires a knowledge of ancient mythology, astronomy and geography. (See the beginning of Paradiso XXIX or Paradiso IX, 82 ff.) Dante wrote in the vernacular but not for the populace. He wrote for the learned who could be supposed to have the myths of Ovid at their finger tips. His readers must recognize "the consort of old Tithonous" and what is meant by

> I straight conceived
> Delusion opposite to that which raised
> Between the man and fountain, amorous flame.

Dante has indeed been praised for the directness and concision of his style; but the reader can judge for himself by comparing the original of the Lord's Prayer with Dante's elaboration of it. (Purgatorio XI.)

Even if we master Dante's own language and with the aid of commentaries, unravel the hundreds of obscure references to ancient and mediaeval Italian places, persons and events, we have not removed the fundamental obscurity of the text due to Dante's preoccupation with allegoric meanings. The modern reader does not like allegories, or writings in which every passage is to be taken in several senses.

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We may read and admire Spenser's Faery Queen or Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, but only because the picturesque language and the vividness of the incidents portrayed make these works sufficiently enticing on the merely literal level. But it is impossible to do this with Dante. He has himself repeatedly assured us, in the Comedy, in the Convito, and in the letter to Can Grande, that we must not stop with the literal meaning but must go on to

> The lore concealed
> Under close texture of the mystic strain.
> (Inferno IX, 63, Purg. IX, 64.)

The literal meaning, indeed, is often pointless and, as in the case of the allegory of the history of the church (Purg. XXXII), somewhat grotesque. Moreover, what the hidden allegoric meaning is, six hundred years of commentating has not always fully revealed—and this is true of matters fundamental for the whole interpretation of the Comedy. Thus, who is the veltro or greyhound who shall arise to redeem Italy and chase back to hell the wolf that obstructed Dante's path? Adherents of the political interpretation are divided as to whether it refers to Can Grande, Henry VII or to some indefinite future redeemer. So those who favor a "spiritual" interpretation and hold that the wolf interprets avarice, are divided as to whether the veltro stands for Christ, the Holy Spirit, or the Archangel Michael. Still others see here a reference to a literary reformer like Dante himself or Cino da Pistoia. But a scholar and intellectually honest man like Boccaccio, living closer to Dante than any modern writer, frankly confesses his ignorance.

Dante also estranges us by his antiquated learning. It is not, of course, necessary that poetry should always be up-to-date in its geography, astronomy and history. It would be absurd to regard departures in these respects as blemishes in poets like Homer or Milton, whose scenes are located in the vague, illimitable realms of the imagination. Not so, however, with a poet like Dante, whose description leaves so little to our imagination. When he gives us the exact latitude and longitude of the earthly paradise by telling us it is at the antipodes of Jerusalem, we are tempted to consult an atlas and find an uninteresting portion of Polynesia. The result is as disconcerting as if a modern novelist located a lake and sylvan scene at Broadway and 42nd Street.

But the main difficulties which the Divine Comedy offers to the modern reader are in its subject matter. Unless we accept its supernaturalism seriously and wholeheartedly many of the hideous pictures of the Inferno are as unconvincing artistically, as they are repulsive to the modern moral consciousness. In the Purgatorio and Paradiso, too, passages of rare poetic beauty are separated by long and barren stretches of pedantic arguments in scholastic theology and antiquated, silly stuff such as the explanation of the spots on the moon, or how infants can have different degrees of holiness.

These difficulties may well be viewed as of secondary importance. They are of little moment to Italians who rightly see in Dante a forerunner and, indeed, a spiritual creator of modern united Italy. They are also of little weight to those who can appreciate the haunting music of Dante's soft Tuscan dialect. But it is vain to deny that they are real difficulties to the non-Italian readers of modern tastes. Those, therefore, who would promote the reading of Dante should avoid praising Dante for his mediaeval conceptions of art and morals. They should emphasize rather that humanity is deeper than modernity and that Dante is intensely human in his loves and hates, in his strength and weakness.

To the modern critically-minded reader Dante as the central figure of the Comedy is hardly heroic. We demand that our hero do something great and Dante is helpless and has always to be led. None the less, he is profoundly human in expressing our natural weaknesses, possessed by "vile fear" at the beginning of his journey, fainting through comparison at the plight of Paolo and Francesca, violent with the violent Argenti, treacherous to the traitor Bocco, and not altogether unsusceptible even to that pathologic or "unnatural" vice for which Brunetti Latini and Aldobranti are condemned.

Dante's adherence to mediaevalism may help to give the entire Comedy an imposing architectonic completeness rare in the works of men. But to the same mediaevalism is undoubtedly due the mass of what is to us superfluous and inappropriate. To the intensity of Dante's emotional life, however, we must attribute the burning vividness of his scenes and portraits. When the shades of the dead are not didactic their speeches are marvellous condensations producing statuesque effects together with the atmosphere or contagion of the human emotions which possess them. That is the real reason why the Divine Comedy has attracted poets like Shelley and painters like Doré and Flaxman. What makes a work of art endure is the appeal not to the current mode, but to the more deeply elemental which is always with us. In this respect Dante is certain to outlive many modern works, just as Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver's Travels bid fair to outlive The Egoist and The Golden Bowl.

MORRIS R. COHEN.

Two Women Poets

Red Earth, by Alice Corbin. Chicago: Ralph Fletcher. $1.50.

Precipitations, by Evelyn Scott. New York: Nicholas L. Brown. $1.50.

MRS. CORBIN HENDERSON'S is amongst American books of verse the nearest to a collection of folk-songs that I know of. The poems are concerned with very simple and quite fundamental themes; many of them are in forms that are traditional, and behind them one feels the life of a community that is conscious of having been many generations in a particular environment. The poems, too, have an impressive landscape.

Red Earth is from New Mexico—from the edge of the desert and the sight of the puebloes. Mrs. Corbin Henderson has had a painter's influence upon her, and in her poems the outline and color of things seen are well marked.

> An old man stoops
> For a forgotten fagot,
> Forehead of bronze,
> Between white locks
> Bound with a rag of scarlet.

But in the poems that are closest to the country—the poems that have the tang of folk-song—this feeling for outline and color is not felt as conscious.

> This valley is not ours, nor the mountains,
> Nor the names we give them.

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These, the opening lines of the first poem, may be read as one of the themes of Red Earth—the poems are an interpretation of a country that other races had made their own. And yet there is a reconciliation with the strange country and with the alien people—a reconciliation that is through the sense of death that has dogged all the races —of death that is very present in the desert.

What hills, what hills so dark and cold,
What hills against the sky?
These are the last hills you shall see
Before you turn to die.

The landscape is blent with the thought of death, or death and of a dumb life going on.

Mrs. Corbin Henderson has done something which, as far as I know, is unique in American poetry. She has put into a book of poems a community that has a spiritual life of its own. She lets us not only see but know men and women at the edge of the desert—the old man to whom death comes on the Acequia Madre, Pedro Montoya of Arroyo Hondo, Una Anciana Mexicana, the three women on the road to Cundiyo, the old woman of the poem La Muerte De La Vieja, the goat-herd Juan Quintana, "sunburnt like the hills" and with eyes that have "a strange goat look," and the Petrolino who makes complaint about the passing of old ways—and the people she tells us of belong to the earth she writes about. With its landscape, its men and women, its poems that have the guitar-measure of the Spanish folk-song or the dull chant of the Indian cermony, there is much life between the red and black covers of Red Earth.

Mrs. Scott's Precipitations is beside Mrs. Corbin Henderson's Red Earth. The books touch cover to cover but between them is a curve. To explain what that curve is the reviewer has to make a digression.

Originally poetry dealt with things that belonged to a community: when Hesiod told how and when to build a wagon or make ready a ship; when Homer spoke of swords or armour, the poets were dealing with things that all who heard shared in as possessions—it was their wagon, their ship, their armour, their sword that was being celebrated. We lost this sort of poetry when we left the camp and the communal village—William Morris tried to revive it—and then the poets began to sing of personal experience, but of personal experience generalized and knit to some philosophy, of personal experience that could go with certain traditional and recognized attitudes.

But suppose one has no interest in general possession or traditional attitudes or accepted philosophies? Suppose one takes stock only in feelings that are fluid? One's poetry would then deal with states of mind, images, reflections; one would make poetry that has nothing to do with action.

Mrs. Evelyn Scott's is this sort of poetry. It takes us to a place where there are no shared possessions and where there are no springs of action. As I read Precipitations I feel that this verse has the same relation to poetry that the marionette play has to drama. I am interested because something is being put before me in an unfamiliar way. But all the time I have the feeling that for all its accomplishment, all its adroitness, this poetry is a way of understating life.

RIOTS

As if all the birds rushed up in the air,
Fluttering;
Hoots, calls, cries.
I never knew such a monster even in child dreams.
It grows:
Glass smashed;
Stores shut;
Windows tightly closed;
Dull, far-off murmurs of voices.

Blood—
The soft, sticky patter of falling drops in the silence.
Everything inundated.
Faces float off in a red dream.
Still the song of the sweet succulent patter.

Blood—
I think it oozes from my finger tips.
—Or maybe it drips from the brow of Jesus.

The poem I like best is:

QUARREL

Abruptly, from a wall of clear cold silence
Like an icy glass,
Myself looked out at me
And would not let me pass.
I wanted to reach you
Before it was too late;
But my frozen image barred the way
With vacant hate.

Mrs. Scott's poetry belongs to a territory that the moderns have opened up. I think it is for the novelists, not for the poets. I do not think poetry can flourish in this territory. The discharge of the poetical emotion is into the world of movement and action.

PADRAIC COLUM.

Selected Current Books

The German Army in Belgium, translated by E. N. Bennet. Huebsch. $3.00.

An English ex-officer translates the White Book defending the German Government against charges of military atrocity in Belgium. The preface discusses reprisals in Ireland.

What Japan Thinks, edited by K. K. Kawakami. Macmillan. $2.00.

A group of articles by Japanese publicists, traversing the topics that concern the approaching Conference.

Moltke, by Lt. Col. F. E. Whitton. Holt.

In the Makers of the Nineteenth Century series.

Victor Hugo, by Marie Duclaux. Holt.

In the Makers of the Nineteenth Century series.

Quentin Roosevelt, a sketch with letters, by Kermit Roosevelt. $2.50.

A memorial volume.

Psychology, by Robert S. Woodworth. Holt.

A book for the beginner.

Contributors

JOHN DEWEY, professor of philosophy at Columbia University, has recently returned from China.

ROBERT COLLYER WASHBURN is an undergraduate in the College of Architecture of Cornell University.

ALFRED E. ZIMMERN is a graduate of New College, Oxford. He is the author of the Greek Commonwealth; and Nationality and Government and other Wartime Essays.

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FREDERICK STARR, the anthropologist, is the author of Readings from Modern Mexican Authors; Indians of Southern Mexico; In Indian Mexico; Japanese Proverbs and Pictures; and Liberia.

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